Festive cheer for Scottish parks with multi-million Heritage Lottery investment

17/12/2012

Wilton Lodge Park in Hawick, associated with Scottish sporting legends, Steve Hislop, Jimmie Guthrie, and Bill McLaren, received funding of £2.6million to create an 'Outdoor Heart of Hawick' while in the West of Scotland a grant of £585,000 will help restore Kelvingrove bandstand, and funding of £527,100 will see the Grand Fountain, in Paisley's Fountain Gardens Park, brought back to its former glory.

HLF also announced initial support for a grant of £3.1million to revitalise one of Scotland's most visited parks, Dean Castle Country Park in Kilmarnock.

Colin McLean, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland, said: "This has been a difficult time for parks with unrelenting pressure to manage budgets, so we are delighted to be able to bring some festive cheer. Our parks, and the historic features within them, are a wonderful legacy from our ancestors which are enjoyed by all ages and are often a community's only green space in which to relax away from the pressures of daily life. That's why HLF is committed to protecting these precious places.

"Through our Parks for People programme, we want to encourage more people through the park gates, forge new links with communities, and kick-start further local regeneration. We continue to champion parks, not just because they are an important part of our heritage, but because they make a huge difference to the quality of life for millions of Scots."

Wilton Lodge Park, Hawick
Confirmed HLF grant of £2,662,300

The second most visited attraction in the Scottish Borders, Wilton Lodge Park has played an important role in the social history of the area from the Common Riding ceremony, dating back to 1703, taking place there each year, to the more recent cultural associations with rugby and motorcycle racing.

The project will improve this beautiful park with heritage features such as the former bandstand recreated to its original design for events and celebrations; existing war memorials and fountains conserved; and a new play park, café and footbridge introduced. Proposals include using some of the walled garden for a community food growing project which will allow community groups and volunteers to carry out vocational and therapeutic works. Paths and tree management will reinstate lost views and interpretation, seating and signage will be improved.

Kelvingrove Bandstand and Amphitheatre
Confirmed HLF grant of £585,000

On the Buildings at Risk register since 2004, Kelvingrove Bandstand and Ampitheatre is now in a critical condition. Built in 1924, it played a central part in the cultural and civic life of Glasgow for 75 years, accommodating up to 7,000 people for outdoor entertainment and political rallies in its heyday. The only original surviving bandstand in Glasgow, it will be restored as a new performance venue for the city ready for the 2014 Commonwealth Games. Running in tandem to the restoration will be a programme of activities to make the public aware of its place in Glasgow's history, from collecting historical footage, to opportunities in traditional building skills, to a 1920's inspired event.

Grand Fountain, Paisley
Confirmed HLF grant of £527,100

Dating from 1868 and gifted to the people of Paisley by Thomas Coats, The Grand Fountain is one of the most significant 19th century cast iron ornamental spray fountain in Scotland. Reaching 26 feet high, its ornate tiered fantasy of herons, dolphins and cherubs is a legacy of the area's industry, the textile mills that financed it and the Sun Foundry that made it, as well as a reflection of the architectural fashions of the time. The signature feature of Fountain Gardens Park, Paisley's oldest public garden, the fountain is currently fenced off for safety, its surfaces badly corroded and its decorative detail lost. This project will restore it to full working order and in its original colour scheme.

Dean Castle Country Park, Kilmarnock
First-round pass of £3,129,300 including a Development Grant of £45,500

With visitor figures close to one million people a year, Dean Castle Country Park is highly valued by the local community. The former estate, which dates back to the late 12th or early 13th century, retains a 14th century castle as its focal point and includes 30 hectares of Ancient Woodland. Although an urban park with housing estates on three edges, it contains a huge array of biodiversity with 367 recorded species of plants, a great variety of nesting and migrating birds, amphibians, and mammals.

The project plans to rejuvenate both the built and natural heritage of the park: a new civic space will be created for outdoor theatre, music and crafts; the laundry houses will be restored to use as workshops and enterprise units: the designed landscape of the formal gardens will be restored; and a new bridge, 6km path and visitor centre created.

Notes to editors

• Today's second-round pass awards to Wilton Lodge Park is from the Parks for People programme which has a two-stage or two-round application process. The full grant has now been awarded following a successful second-round application from this park.

• A first-round pass means the project meets our criteria for funding and we believe it has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award. On occasion, an applicant with a first round pass will also be awarded development funding towards the development of their scheme.

• The Parks for People programme uses Lottery funds to support the regeneration, conservation and increased enjoyment of public parks and the conservation of cemeteries. The programme aims to improve the local environment and put parks firmly back at the heart of community life. HLF is continuing to fund public park projects in 2012/13 with an investment of £24m. The next closing date for applications is 28 February 2013.

• Over 170 delegates gathered at the Royal Geographical Society on 25 October for the HLF / Big Lottery Fund UK Public Parks Summit. The day included presentations from park experts from the USA and Denmark, as well as the UK, including an address from Communities Minister Don Foster.

Since 1995, HLF has awarded over £38million to 56 public parks across Scotland.

Further information

Heritage Lottery Fund: Shiona Mackay on 01786 870 638 / 07779 142 890 or Katie Owen, HLF Press Office on 020 7591 6036 / 07973 613 820 or katieo@hlf.org.uk

Wilton Park Lodge: Mark Wilson, Scottish Borders Council on 01835 826 632 or mark.wilson@scotborders.gov.uk

Dean Castle Country Park: Anneke Freel, East Ayrshire Council on 01563 554 748 or anneke.freel@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

Grand Fountain Paisley: Colin Orr, Renfrewshire Council on 0141 618 7348 or colin.orr@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Kelvingrove Bandstand: Miranda Lorraine, Glasgow Building Preservation Trust on 0141 221 6061 or Miranda@gbpt.org