Five historic parks to be restored thanks to £7.9m Lottery funding

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HLF has also separately awarded £3.1m to two parks in Scotland. All these parks can now begin major redevelopment work.

Carole Souter, Chief Executive of the Heritage Lottery Fund, said: “Come rain or shine parks are at the heart of communities and the backdrop to many of our lives. Looking after them takes hard work, dedication and significant financial support; exactly why Lottery funding is so important. These grants will help improve facilities, restore historic features and encourage more people to come and enjoy their local green space.”

Nat Sloane, Big Lottery Fund’s England Chair, said: “Today’s funding will have a long-lasting impact for all who use and enjoy these parks; they will be cleaner, safer and there will be more opportunities for people to get involved and connect with their parks and communities through volunteering, events and tours. It is fantastic to be playing a role in restoring and maintaining these wonderfully historic parks and helping to safeguard their futures for generations to come.”

Parks awarded a confirmed grant today include:

Isabella Plantation, Richmond Park, London – confirmed HLF/BIG grant of £1.4m
HLF/BIG support will deliver a number of improvements to the plantation including: enhancing the existing disabled users car park and entrance gates; and upgrading path networks to provide more accessible routes around the garden. There will be an impressive range of educational and volunteer activities on offer too, such as wildlife identification sessions and guided tours. Two horticultural apprenticeships will be made available providing a great chance to get hands-on experience in one London’s best-loved parks.

Set within a Victorian woodland enclosure planted between 1831 and 1835, work began on the Plantation in the late 1940s and it was opened to the public in 1953. An important collection of Camellias and Rhododendrons has been developed alongside many other rare and unusual trees and shrubs. It also houses a National Collection of Wilson 50 Kurume Azaleas, collected by the famous plant hunter Ernest Wilson in Japan in the 1920s.

Northumberland Park, North Shields – confirmed HLF/BIG grant of £2.2m
North Tyneside Council will use HLF/BIG’s grant to restore the park back to its former glory by opening up historic views, managing the woodland, recreating formal bedding displays and conserving degraded historic features. Volunteers will play a major role in the project and get involved with community archaeology events, guided tours and gardening days.

Northumberland Park was opened in 1885 by the Duke of Northumberland who donated the land to provide a park for the people of North Shields. Stretching across 12ha, the site contains historical structures including what is believed to be the ruins of a medieval hospital dating from the 13th century and a Civil War burial ground. The park, partly made up of mature woodland, is also an important habitat for a range of wildlife species.

Rouken Glen Park, East Renfrewshire – confirmed HLF grant of £2.1m

Covering 58ha, Rouken Glen Park is one of Scotland's largest parks. One side of the park is laid out formally, reflecting its early life as Estate Grounds to Thornliebank House, while the other is made up of woodland and meadows with a picturesque 19th-century landscape of walks and waterfalls. Known for its geological and archaeological importance, the park has a number of interesting features including a cup and ring marked rock dating from the Neolithic or Bronze Age period.

HLF's grant will enable East Renfrewshire Council to restore the park's historic features, including the pavilion, which will be turned into a much-needed community space and conserve the walled garden. The local community will be heavily involved throughout the project helping with restoration work and taking part in archaeological recording and wildlife conservation.

The two other parks that have received confirmed funding today are:

- **Eastwood Park, Chesterfield, Derby – confirmed HLF/BIG grant of £1.07m**
- **Dock Park, Dumfries – confirmed HLF grant of £991,300**

Initial support[2] has also been awarded to the following parks: Initial support and development funding of £1.1m has been awarded to the six following parks across the UK. This money will enable applicants to develop detailed plans for future restoration work.

Joint initial HLF/BIG support
Gunnersbury Park, Hounslow, London – initial support for a £4.6m bid, including £321,000 development funding

Langtons Gardens, Havering, London – initial support for a £1.6m bid, including £163,100 development funding

Memorial Park, Fleetwood, Lancashire – initial support for a £2m bid, including £102,600 development funding

Grosvenor and Hilbert Park, Tunbridge Wells – initial support for a £2.2m bid, including £148,800 development funding

Cassiobury Park, Watford – initial support for a £4.9m bid, including £418,600 development funding

HLF initial support
Stornoway Castle Grounds, Stornoway – initial support for a £4m bid, including £195,600 development funding

Notes to editors

[1] Today's second-round pass awards are 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 these parks.

[2] 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.

The Parks for People programme uses Lottery funds to support the regeneration, conservation and increased enjoyment of public parks. The programme aims to improve the local environment and put parks firmly back at the heart

of community life. 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. Over the period 2006-2012 the Big Lottery Fund (BIG) have committed up to £92m (in England only) and HLF have committed £140m to public parks across the UK.

The Big Lottery Fund (BIG), the largest distributor of National Lottery good cause funding, is responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised for good causes by the National Lottery. BIG 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 June 2004 BIG has awarded over £4.4bn. The Fund was formally established by Parliament on 1 December 2006. Visit the BIG website.

Further information

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