It’s a Lottery Christmas cracker for Runcorn Hill & Heath Park!

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Halton’s Runcorn Hill & Heath Park has been awarded a cracker of a Christmas in the shape of £1.3m grant-funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and Big Lottery Fund (BIG).

Following visitor consultations and detailed planning, the Runcorn Hill & Heath 'Parks for People’ project competed for funding and is one of only nine parks in England to have been awarded a grant.

Runcorn Hill & Heath has received the grant to help preserve its 32 hectares of natural landscapes and formal grounds which provide an invaluable resource for residents and visitors. The project will provide new visitor facilities including toilets, refreshments and community spaces, and new opportunities to learn about and enjoy the heritage of the park.

The Runcorn Hill & Heath ‘Parks for People’ project will cover a five-year programme of infrastructure improvements, education activities, events and community participation projects.

The funding also includes the creation of two five-year posts dedicated to the project; a Community Enablement Officer and a Conservation Partnerships Officer.

Responding to community survey work, the project will provide the restoration, interpretation and improvement needed for the park to develop and succeed, and for its merits to be enjoyed and offered to a wider audience.

Ron Hignett, Halton Borough Council’s Portfolio Holder for Environment said: “I am very pleased that the Runcorn Hill & Heath project will conserve, restore and develop the diverse historic elements of the park, and provide new and improved visitor facilities. The project will also focus on the park's unique industrial and social heritage, encouraging new interest in the park from a wider audience across a broader catchment area, and revitalizing this valuable asset for future generations.”

Carole Souter, Chief Executive of HLF, said on behalf of HLF and BIG: “We’re delighted to be bringing a bit of seasonal cheer to a number of popular parks, including Runcorn Hill & Heath Park, especially as demand for funding continues to be very high. It’s been a tough year for those caring for our public parks but HLF and BIG’s commitment to this important part of the UK’s heritage is unwavering. Parks enrich millions of people’s lives on a daily basis – providing room to relax and reflect – and it’s vital that we continue to value and protect them not just for ourselves but for the next generation too.”

Notes to editors

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.

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 and BIG will continue to fund public park projects from FY

2013 / 2014 to FY 2015 / 2016 with a joint investment of £100m.

Since 1994, HLF has awarded a total of £640m to over 700 public parks across the UK

Big Lottery Fund (BIG): the largest of the National Lottery Good Causes distributors, has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since its inception in June 2004. It was established by Parliament on 1 December 2006. Big Lottery Fund's website.

Further information

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