

Artists impression of Pavilion and formal gardens at Northumberland Park

The award is the latest success for North Tyneside Council's Excellent Parks Programme.

Northumberland Park, which lies between Tynemouth and North Shields, opened in 1885 and is comprised of woodland areas, formal gardens, pond, bowling greens and a play site.

The funding will allow the reinstatement and restoration of lost features, such as the fountain and street furniture in the park, as well as creating essential new visitor facilities to support the park's long-term future.

Work will get underway in the Autumn and will be completed by late 2015.

The Elected Mayor for North Tyneside, Mrs Linda Arkley, said: "This is not only great news for North Tyneside Council, but also for the local community who have rallied to support this project and worked incredibly hard to secure the future of Northumberland Park for future generations. We have listened to the views of park users in shaping our bid and we will continue to listen and involve the local community as we take this forward."

Ivor Crowther, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund North East, said on behalf of HLF and BIG: "Northumberland Park is a highly-valued and popular green space for the people of Tynemouth and North Shields. Today's Lottery investment will enable major restoration work to start in earnest on the park's historic features and will drastically enhance the current visitor facitlites. Once completed, this will once again be a first-class resource for the surrounding community and

visitors to enjoy."

The park includes many interesting and unique features including a pet cemetery and the medieval remains of St Leonard's Hospital. The council wants to ensure they are better protected, preserved and interpreted.

Volunteers have established the New Friends of Northumberland Park whose efforts have included working with professional archaeologist to investigate the history of the popular park as well as organising community planting days and assisting with the maintenance of the park.

The broad aims of the scheme are to:

- restore lost features including cast iron railings, Band stand, historic planting schemes, fountains and park furniture
- provide essential new visitor facilities to support the park's long-term future, which will include a café, toilets, community room and terrace within the formal gardens
- improve management and maintenance regime
- improve both physical and intellectual access to the park and its unique history

Wallsend Park is already undergoing a £7million facelift after the HLF awarded a grant of £2.45m towards its £5.2m restoration and regeneration. There are also proposals to improve the Killingworth Lake Park, Tynemouth Park and Churchill Playing Fields.

Notes to editors

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.

HLF is continuing to fund public park projects in 2011/12 with an investment of £20m each year. The next closing date for applications is 31 August 2012. The Big Lottery Fund (BIG) remains committed to working in partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in making a success of the Parks for People programme and will allocate £5million in 2011/12 and another £5m in 2012/13.

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. The Big Lottery Fund website