Phillips Memorial Park to be refurbished

11/07/2011

The work will enable a local memorial to be restored in time for the centenary commemoration of the sinking of the Titanic.

Phillips Memorial Park, situated at the heart of Godalming, runs alongside the River Wey and dates back to 1913. The park is made up of three distinct areas: the original Phillips Memorial Park; an additional pleasure ground; and the Burys Youth Field. The Cloisters were built in 1913 to commemorate Jack Phillips who was the Chief Wireless Telegraphist on the RMS Titanic. The project will coincide with the 100th anniversary of the Titanic's fateful voyage.

HLF/BIG's grant will enable the local council to make extensive repairs to the Cloisters, restore the original landscape and planting design and improve the pond and surrounding wildlife habitats. Volunteers will be encouraged to help with a new park maintenance and management programme and weekend community activities. They will also be trained in horticulture, garden design and plant identification. Local people will benefit from a range of events based around the park's fascinating Titanic connection.

The Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, Member of Parliament for South West Surrey, Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport, said: "This is excellent news and huge thanks must go to the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Big Lottery Fund. Godalming's Jack Phillips has sealed his place in history as a selfless individual who gave his life to try and save others as the Titanic was going down. It is wonderful to be able to honour him in this way."

Stuart McLeod, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund South East England, said: "We are very lucky in the South East to have so many green spaces at our fingertips – Phillips Memorial Park is a wonderful example. Alongside the physical changes, it's great to know that local people will also have the chance to be hands on throughout the project. HLF and BIG are committed to continuing to champion our public parks that make a real difference to the quality of people's daily lives."

Fiona Dempsie, Big Lottery Fund's Head of the South East region, said: "Phillips Memorial Park brings together the historical heritage of the area, the natural environment and the local community. The history of this park and its links with the Titanic are greatly important, and with 2012 being especially significant, it's fantastic that today's funding will help to bring the park back to its former glory in time for this special commemoration."

Councillor Roger Steel Waverley BC's councillor responsible for leisure, said: "Godalming is justifiably proud of Jack Phillips, who was an incredibly brave man and it is right that he should be remembered today. A monument was erected shortly after the disaster. However, how appropriate it is, as we approach the 100th anniversary, that we can look forward to this exciting project which will be enjoyed by so many of Godalming's residents and visitors and which enhances a beautiful natural open space within the town."

Notes to editors

Phillips Memorial Park has been awarded a second-round pass 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.

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 past three years, the Big Lottery Fund (BIG) has invested up to £80m (in England only) with £70m coming from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the UK.

Big Lottery Fund (BIG)

The Big Lottery Fund (BIG) rolls out close to £2million in Lottery good cause money every 24 hours, which together with other Lottery distributors means that across the UK most people are within a few miles of a Lottery-funded project. BIG, the largest of the National Lottery good cause distributors, has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since its inception in June 2004. The Big Lottery Fund and its predecessor bodies have invested more than £1.3billion in environmental initiatives.

Further information

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