Four Scottish parks set to bloom thanks to £4.8m from the Heritage Lottery Fund

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Four urban parks are to have a new lease of life thanks to major funding announced today by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). MacRosty Park in Crieff was awarded a grant of £1,161,000 and Burngreen Park in Kilsyth was awarded £420,300. In Aberdeen, Duthie Park was given a Stage one pass* for a grant of £2,563,000 and development funding of £71,500, and Cambuslang Park also received a Stage one pass for a grant of £551,500 and development funding of £22,700.

HLF's Parks for People programme is designed to revive dilapidated parks, reversing years of neglect and vandalism. New amenities and exciting educational and play facilities have been funded as well as the restoration and rejuvenation of planting, paths, ponds and historic structures ranging from winter gardens to bandstands. To date x parks in Scotland have benefitted from HLF investment amounting to more than £xmillion.

Colin McLean, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland, said: "Parks are an important part of our community heritage. Whether for walking, picnicking, sports or community events, they are a basic part of our lives offering a pleasant leafy, green space to relax and get fresh air.

"HLF's pioneering approach marries people's pride in the history of their parks with the need to provide up-to-date facilities and access. Parks for People has been a tremendous success encouraging many thousands more people back through their park gates. We are delighted to be able to invest in these parks today. Spring is in the air and with it comes a new optimism for these special places."

MacRosty Park
The picturesque MacRosty Park has been an important recreation area for local people and visitors to Crieff since 1902. However, although it sits within a striking landscape, the park's infrastructure is now in poor condition and the significant investment that is to be made will ensure that it once again becomes a thriving community park. Historic features, which give the park its character, will be restored including renovation of the Edwardian bandstand for summer concerts and reintroduction of water to the 14th century Mill Lade that runs through the park. Contemporary play facilities, including water play, will bring the park to life again for children and families while work to paths and bridges will ensure that people of all ages can enjoy the natural environment.

The former tennis pavilion will be refurbished and extended to become a multi functional building providing a venue for community activities with refreshments available during the summer season. A new Greenspace Ranger post is to be created to co-ordinate volunteer activities and opportunities for learning, including plans to use the park as an outdoor classroom for children from schools in the area.

Burngreen Park, Kilsyth
The history of Burngreen Park can be traced back to the 17th century as a bleaching ground for linen. Some of the important historic features within this park have now deteriorated and although still an important part of Kilsyth's identify, the park is now primarily used as a short cut to the town centre.

The aim of this project is to turn that around and once again make it a park to spend time in and enjoy. Building on the success of Kilsyth Civic Week and International Carnival, the aim is to develop it as a main outdoor events and performance venue. This will include professional events, community-let amateur events and activities for schools.

Restoration works will be carried out to the bandstand, drinking fountain and war memorial. Walls, paths, bridges, seating and lighting will also be improved.

Duthie Park

Duthie Park, home to the David Welch Winter Gardens, is one of the most popular parks in Scotland with over half a million visitors every year. A popular venue for music festivals, community events and cricket clubs, this favourite of the North-east is an outstanding example of a late-Victorian park.

The Duthie Park was bequeathed to the City by Miss Elizabeth Crombie Duthie in remembrance of her brother and uncle. It was opened in 1883 by Princess Beatrix.

It is because of its historical significance, encapsulating a designed medium –sized, late Victorian public park that it is included in Historic Scotland's Inventory of Designed Landscapes and Gardens. The restoration and reconstruction of some of the lost elements will be in line with the Historic Landscape Survey and the Conservation Management Plan.

The key proposals include: restoration of the linked ponds to their designed features with the top pond reinstated for boating; the restoration of the Duthie fountain to full working order and re-instated in its original setting; the unique rose mound feature with its spiral pathway will be returned to its original striking design, including the reinstatement of the flagpole; replacement of railings and some seats, which will all be recast from the original designs; stone boundary walls will be rebuilt; lost features such as the promenade and the circular pond and fountain will be restored to their original design features.

New elements will include the conversion of the listed 1920's bowls pavilion to provide office accommodation for the proposed parks ranger staff and provision of cloakroom and kitchen facilities for visiting groups, volunteers and trainees. The redundant tennis courts will be converted to a horticultural training area including a model allotment, to develop a range of activities through horticultural modules and workshops to encourage both adults and junior audiences.

Cambuslang Park

Although formally established as a park in 1913, the site of Cambuslang Park has been used for hundreds of years as a gathering space, beauty spot and in the 1740's, a focus for a Christian revival movement. The only green space in the area, it remains popular today with an active Friends group holding many fun and cultural events.

Covering an area of 11 hectares, Cambuslang Park has four very distinct areas: the formal area with the historic 'Preaching Braes'; the Borgie Glen, a dramatic tree-lined ravine; the sunken arena and children's play area; and an area of open grassland which is used for sports and recreation.

Each area will benefit from the restoration encouraging more people to use the Park. The arena will be improved to allow more events to take place, the play area will be upgraded, and railings, paths and seating areas will be improved. The introduction of a full-time Park Keeper will help develop new activities and oversee people using the Park. Themed guided walks will increase awareness of the Park's rich history while more organised sporting events will encourage young people to use its facilities.