# Spring time investment boost for six UK parks

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The parks in London, Darlington, Oldham and Stoke-on-Trent are now set to begin major redevelopment work.

Carole Souter, Chief Executive of HLF, on behalf of HLF and BIG, said: “Now the clocks have gone forward, it’s the perfect time to get out and enjoy our many wonderful public parks. We should all remember that parks need constant care and attention, often relying heavily on voluntary support and continued investment. HLF and BIG recognise this and are proud to play a key role in supporting such an important part of our country’s heritage.”

The six parks receiving grants today are:

**Bishop’s Park and Fulham Palace Grounds, Fulham, London - £3.64m**

The gardens of Fulham Palace are amongst the most important in the country and were once surrounded by the longest moat in England. The grounds were made famous in the 16th-century when grapes were cultivated there and sent to Queen Elizabeth I by Bishop Grindal.**

Bishop’s Park officially opened in 1893 and included land known as Bishop’s Walk, Bishop’s Meadow and West Meadow.

The Parks for People grant will enable these two pieces of parkland to be reunited through the restoration of the existing landscape and buildings. Volunteering opportunities and activity programmes will also help involve the local community in the day-to-day running of the park.

**Horniman Gardens, Forest Hill, London - £907,000**

Horniman Gardens comprise 6.4ha of formal and natural landscapes, ranging from sunken rose gardens to ethno-botanical planting. In the heart of South London, the gardens provide a tranquil escape for local residents and visitors to the Horniman Museum.

This money from HLF and BIG means the park’s historic features, such as the bandstand terrace, can be restored and picturesque views of the city opened up. Plans include a world food garden and new learning centre that will let young people learn about and engage with the history of the gardens

**Victoria Park, Tower Hamlets, London - £4.5m**

Victoria Park was opened in 1845, after Queen Victoria received a petition of 30,000 signatures from East Enders requesting a park in the area. Widely known as the ‘people’s park’, Victoria Park hosted the ‘Rock against Racism’ concert in the 1970s and has seen a wide range of public speaking spectacles, campaigning and events in its long history. It's still hugely popular today - 84% of people asked supported the plans for the planned improvements and the local council's visitor survey showed the park can expect over 7.5 million visits a year.

Lottery funding will go towards restoring the park's four most well-known features: the Burdett-Coutts Fountain; the Chinese Pagoda; the Dogs of Alcibiades; and the Old English Garden. There will be new volunteering and training opportunities including the chance to learn horticultural and conservation skills.

**Brinkburn Denes Park, Darlington - £878,500**

The establishment of the Denes began by piecing various parts of existing landscape together during the 1920s, starting with the then named Cockerton Valley Gardens, a disused part of the Pease Estate. The Pease family, who donated the land, lived and worked in the area and were heavily involved the coal and manufacturing industries. They were also the founders of the Darlington and Stockton railway.

The Denes serves an area of terraced housing where local people have very little green space. The grant will be used to revitalise the existing landscape and introduce a full range of activities and events - including volunteering and training opportunities for young people. Better lighting and new entrances to the park will also be put in, improving access and creating a safer place for the community to enjoy.

**Dunwood Park, Oldham - £1.093m**

Dunwood Park lies in Shaw in Oldham and was created in 1912 to give the local community and mill workers access to a healthy environment and green space. Its combination of formal landscape design and woodland is unique.

Plans for Dunwood include restoring and refurbishing two park buildings, revitalising worn-out paths, repairing original dry stone walls, and creating an adventure play zone. The park will also be developed as an active hub for local events and activities.

**Burslem Park, Stoke-on-Trent, - £2.097m**

Grade II listed Burslem Park was created by Thomas Mawson, a prolific landscape designer.  It opened to the public in 1894 and still retains much of its original 19th -century features.

Plans include extensive restoration work to the park's pavilion and terracotta terrace plus improved access, heritage and wildlife walks and special environmental educational programmes for schools and families.

**Notes to editors**

* Today's Stage Two 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 Stage Two applications from these parks.

****Bishop Edmund Grindal** (c. 1519 – 6 July 1583) was an English church leader who successively held the posts of Bishop of London, Archbishop of York and Archbishop of Canterbury.

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 2009 to deliver a multi-million pound investment in public parks of £150m. Over the 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.

HLF is continuing to fund public park projects in 2010 with an investment of £20m each year.

Parks for People programme grants range from £250,000 to £5m with two rounds of funding each year.

Every completed park project will be expected to achieve the annual prestigious Green Flag Award and in doing so demonstrate quality standards of care and upkeep.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported 33,900 projects, allocating £4.4billion across the UK.

HLF has invested £525m in 530 historic public parks, gardens, squares and promenades right across the UK.

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.  BIG has invested more than £700million in wider environmental initiatives. www.biglotteryfund.org.uk

**Further information**

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