

Stanmer Park celebrates the New Year as Lottery says Yes!

06/01/2015



Brighton and Hove city has received a development grant of £291,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and Big Lottery Fund (BIG) for the Stanmer Park Restoration Project. The money comes from the Funds' joint Parks for People scheme and will be match funded by Brighton & Hove City Council and the South Downs National Park Authority.

The news mean that the council can now go ahead and develop detailed plans to support its bid for around £4million funding to restore Stanmer's historic landscape and buildings. HLF and BIG have confirmed that £4m funding has been earmarked for the project.

The Stanmer Park and Estate Restoration Project aims to restore the park's landscape, and Grade II listed buildings, protect natural features and safeguard its rare landscapes.

"It's fantastic news," said Councillor Pete West, chair of the Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee. "Stanmer Park is extremely well loved and has the potential to become an important gateway encouraging people from Brighton and Hove to explore and appreciate their local countryside and our Biosphere.

“It’s wonderful that HLF and BIG has given us this opportunity to progress our plans and work with the South Downs National Park Authority to ensure it is restored, enhanced and preserved for future generations.

“Stanmer Park has the potential to become one of the greatest attractions in the city.”

Trevor Beattie, Chief Executive for the South Downs National Park Authority, added: “This great news recognises the national importance of Stanmer Park and Estate. This is the first step in restoring Stanmer to its former glory as a major gateway into the South Downs National Park which is easy to reach by train, bus and safe off-road cycle routes.

“This project is a real opportunity to encourage more people to discover, appreciate and benefit from a unique historic estate less than five kilometres from the heart of the city of Brighton and Hove.”

Stuart McLeod, Head of HLF South East, said on behalf of HLF and BIG: “Parks play such an important role in our everyday lives; they boost our health, connect us to nature and are a place to spend time and have fun together. Today’s investment will ensure the historic and community features of Stanmer Park are in better shape so they can be enjoyed by local people long into the future.”

Stanmer Park – Facts and figures

- At 485 hectares, Stanmer Park accounts for a third of all the parks and gardens space in Brighton and Hove.
- Around half a million people visit Stanmer Park every year, and that could rise to 800,000 following the restoration work.
- Records of a settlement at Stanmer date back to Saxon times, During the 18th century an estate was created for the Pelham family, with Stanmer House, built in 1722, at the centre. The park landscape was developed in the style of Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown.
- The farmstead has 18 agricultural buildings dating from the 18th and 19th centuries and there is an 18th-century walled garden to the west of the village.
- During the Second World War Stanmer Park was used to provide billeting and firing ranges for a Canadian regiment. In 1947 Brighton Corporation bought the estate and opened the park to the public in 1953.
- Once the walled garden is enhanced, there would be the potential to grow and produce food on site, and there are also plans to restore one of the original glass houses. A separate bid of £6m was submitted for a Heritage Grant in the summer to carry out improvements and restorations of the home farm complex buildings. Results from this bid will be known in February.
- The bids include input from local organisations, residents and park visitors. More than 2,500 people took part in the two-year consultation.
- Restoration will provide training opportunities for around 100 volunteers, apprenticeship opportunities for local people and facilities for Plumpton Agricultural College to train students.
- If approved, the funding would be spent in a five-year investment programme estimated at £11.9m, starting with drawing up detailed designs with the help of the public and partners. Development work would begin in February which is when the outcome of the bid is expected.

Further information

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