

# Celebrating Success in Bute Park: £5.6million restoration work complete

23/06/2015



Parc Bute

Visits to the park have increased by 100% from around one million to over two million per year since the project began, and the park is now regularly in the top five things to do in Cardiff according to reviewers on the travel website TripAdvisor. The programme of restoration work worth £5.6m was joint-funded by a £3.1m grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and contributions from Cardiff Council and CADW. The site work was completed at the end of last year and now the park's site-based management team, volunteers and active friends group continue to take the park from strength to strength.

The four-year project transformed the park from an underutilised public space with no refreshment or toilet facilities to the most popular park in Cardiff. It involved building the new Summerhouse Café and Bute Park Education Centre, restoration of the Animal Wall and re-flooding the waterbody known as the Mill Leat, which runs along the outer western wall of Cardiff Castle. The Grade II listed West Lodge building was refurbished and converted into the highly-regarded Pettigrew Tea Rooms and the Scheduled Ancient Monument on the site of the old medieval Blackfriars Friary was safeguarded for enjoyment by generations to come. Footpaths were upgraded and new site signage, bins, play trails and sculptures were installed.

Cabinet Member for Environment, Cllr Bob Derbyshire, said: "Not only does the work carried out make the park a more accessible and enjoyable experience for visitors, it also develops learning and recreational opportunities for the widest

possible audience."

Bute Park and Arboretum is nationally important for its Grade I historic designed landscape, its wealth of archaeological and nature conservation interest and for containing the largest arboretum in a public park in the UK.

Cllr Derbyshire added: "The education centre is made from reclaimed bricks, it has a grass roof, its own onsite sewage treatment plant and solar panels. In terms of being sustainable it really does set the benchmark for other buildings to reach. I'm also so pleased that the Animal Wall has had a facelift as it's one of the most delightful and photographed historic features in Cardiff. I often see people having their photograph taken against the wall. Ever since it was designed for the third Marquess of Bute it's been putting a smile onto the faces of visitors to our fantastic city."

Nigel Clubb, member of the Heritage Lottery Fund Committee for Wales, said: "Bute Park is enormously popular with both local people and visitors, and deserves to be celebrated. Now that the work is complete, we are really pleased to see that the park is once again connected to Cardiff Castle and its gardens, creating one fantastic space to explore and enjoy in the heart of the city. I am thrilled that investment by the National Lottery will continue to have such a positive and visible impact on one of Cardiff's most important attractions."

Mike Harper, Chair of the Bute Park Friends Group, said: "Bute Park is a jewel in the crown for Cardiff and to see the recent investment into its improvement is hugely welcomed by all the many residents and visitors who enjoy the park day in day out."

#### **Notes to editors**

A celebration event will be held 5pm–7pm on Tues 23 June at the Bute Park Education Centre, where there will be a chance for photographs of the plaque unveiling (6pm). Please contact the Council Press Office for further details. Alternatively, photos from the event can be provided on request.

Further details about the park and project are available on the [Bute Park website](#).

#### **Further information**

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## **Bute Park restoration celebrated**