Weekend event to unveil £3.2million Exhibition Park



Exhibition Park's restored bandstand Steve Brock

The restoration work has been made possible through £3.2million funding received from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The various facets of the park's improvements programme included a new modern café; the restoration of the Victorian bandstand [old photographs were used for the intricate procedure]; the lake has also been partially restored involving the installation of new wildlife islands and improved drainage; and the existing skate park has been extended and improved with the direct input of the young people who regularly use the leisure space.

The funding hasn't only provided the platform for practical work but it also paved the way for the two employment opportunities with the creation of a dedicated Park Ranger and a part-time Community Support Officer.

Cllr Forbes said: "It's wonderful to see new life being breathed into one of the best Victorian parks in the country. This wouldn't have happened without the dedicated help and support of volunteers and the local community, who worked alongside the council and our partners over the last three years. I'm delighted to be re-opening the park, which I know is one of Newcastle's best loved greenspaces, where people can get together to enjoy all the new facilities on offer."

Cabinet member for Communities and Facilities at Newcastle City Council, Cllr David Stockdale, said: "All of the work that has gone into Exhibition Park has restored one of the North East's most famous parks back to its former glory.

Residents and visitors will see that the improvements to Exhibition Park will make it easier for them to get around whether it's for a run or a gentle evening stroll. Our fantastic parks are a statement of what we stand for as a City and Exhibition Park stands out as something to be proud of."

Saturday's opening ceremony and event will take place between 11am and 2pm at the newly refurbished bandstand, where local musicians will later perform after the official words have been said. Also taking place will be family entertainment including face painting, fun games and a display of the park's history from the Exhibition Park Trust.

Ivor Crowther, Head of HLF North East, said: "Parks and open spaces are vital for our communities, not only for our wellbeing and leisure but also for the heritage they hold and the sense of identity they can offer. Exhibition Park is a shining example of the amazing things that can be achieved with investment of National Lottery players' money and the hard work and dedication of staff, volunteers and the wider community. We're delighted to have played a funding role and look forward to celebrating a bright future for this wonderful park."

Further information

For further information about Exhibition Park in Newcastle please visit the Parks and Countryside section of Newcastle City Council's website or contact Garry Smith, Policy and Communications Officer, on 0191 211 5029.