Big Lottery Fund commits £20m further funding to



The Level, Brighton after its National Lottery-funded restoration

Combined with HLF's commitment of £20m per year under the Parks for People programme in England, this takes the total budget available to £30m per year for new projects.

HLF will also continue to make an additional £4m available for projects in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

This news extends the agreement between the Big Lottery Fund and HLF, which has seen a total of nearly £290m of National Lottery cash invested in reviving over 126 historic green spaces since 2006.

Parks for People provides grants of between £100,000 and £5million to restore and rejuvenate historic parks and cemeteries. Organisations can apply for funding for projects that repair heritage features, open new facilities and run volunteering and activity programmes, involving the community in the running of the park.

Peter Ainsworth, Chair of the Big Lottery Fund, said: "Green spaces are vital to the happiness and health of our communities, so we're really pleased to be continuing our support for the Parks for People programme. In partnership with HLF we've invested almost £290m since 2006 in rejuvenating our parks to help make sure they can be enjoyed now and for years to come."

The news comes a year after HLF pledged to continue investing in public parks after its report *State of UK Public Parks 2014: Renaissance to Risk* revealed that they are at serious risk of decline unless innovative new ways of funding and maintaining them are found. An update on this report is set to be published next summer.

Sir Peter Luff, Chair of HLF, said: “Parks are rightly among the UK’s most highly valued and well-used public spaces and inspire much local pride. There is increasing demand on National Lottery players’ money but I’m sure they will welcome the continuation of this productive partnership with the Big Lottery Fund. Our 'Parks for People' programme plays a major part in ensuring these precious green sanctuaries thrive. I hope even more communities across the UK will come forward to bid for a share of this funding.”

Applications for the next round of Parks for People funding are now open until 29 February 2016 and the first grants from this new investment will be awarded in June 2016.

Success stories

Walsall Arboretum - £4.7million

The Arboretum, located on the edge of Walsall town centre, is one of the borough’s oldest parks, opening in 1874. It attracts visitors across the Black Country and is particularly important for local schools which have no green space within their grounds.

The historic park underwent a major restoration project following National Lottery investment. The Grade II listed boathouse, its two lakes, bandstand and the clock tower were all refurbished and restored to their former glory.

Lloyd Park, Walthamstow, North-East London – £3.9million

Lloyd Park was once home to the artist William Morris as well as newspaper publisher Frank Lloyd. It opened in 1900 and nearby Aveling Park was added to the site in 1912, creating 12 hectares of recreational space for the surrounding community.

The site underwent a major facelift following National Lottery investment which included the restoration of the park's historic features, revitalisation of the landscape and enhancement of wildlife habitats. New facilities included a café, skate park, gallery and community space, which hosts an extensive programme of skills training and educational opportunities for the local community.

Stewart Park, Middlesbrough - £4.3million

This 47-hectare park was opened to the public in 1928. It was originally laid out as a manor house and deer park in the early 1800s by a wealthy army major and is famous as the site of the birthplace of Captain Cook.

National Lottery investment has transformed the park. It now includes a new visitor centre, education venue, shop and two public event spaces. Lakes, paths and woodland areas have all been improved and many of the park’s Victorian buildings have now been opened up to the public. A specialist vocational training centre and cafe have also been developed within the Victorian walled gardens teaching horticultural, conservation and catering skills to the community, especially local young people and adults with disabilities.

Notes to editors

This new investment from the Big Lottery Fund will mean a £10m investment in 2016/17 and £10m in 2017/18.

Further information

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