Rectory Lane Cemetery secures National Lottery



Mr Ghost tells visitors the story of Rectory Lane Cemetery

The aim is to restore the heritage of the town's burial ground and to enhance it to become a truly sustainable community asset. Development funding of £73,600 has been awarded to help the Friends progress their plans to secure a full grant of £952,200 in 2017.

The project aims to carry out essential conservation work on memorials, pathways, seating and walls, improving access and interpretation on site and enriching wildlife. Information on the 1,000 memorials and 7,000 burials that have taken place in the cemetery will be digitised. In addition to telling stories of the lives of local dignitaries such as the Cooper family of the agrichemicals industry and the Smith–Dorrien family, there are also 27 war graves from the First and Second World Wars.

James Moir, a Trustee of the Friends of St Peter's and Convenor of the Rectory Lane Project, said: "We are truly thrilled that the National Lottery has recognised us with this support. It will enable us to step up a gear in the work that is planned to take the Cemetery from a 'Dead' to a 'Living' Space.

"There is something for everyone in the community to get involved in from the care of wildlife to stewarding at live events. We are looking for many different skills and all are welcome. Check the Friends of St Peter's Berkhamsted website or chat to us at our market stall on the last Saturday each month."

Rectory Lane Cemetery was founded by public subscription in 1842. Demand for space meant that two further ‘terraces’ were opened and consecrated in 1894 and 1921 respectively, making three acres in total. The cemetery is one of the precious few green spaces in the town, with more than 200 trees.

Today’s news comes as part of a £32m funding announcement for parks and cemeteries across the UK. Robyn Llewellyn, Head of HLF East of England, said, on behalf of HLF and BIG: “Our parks and cemeteries provide vital connections to our history, our communities and our natural heritage.

"However we use them, public open spaces are an important part of life, which is why we’re delighted to be investing National Lottery players’ money in parks from Bristol to Helensburgh to carry out vital restoration and create some wonderful opportunities for communities and wildlife.”

Notes to editors

To date, more than £776m of money raised by National Lottery players has been invested in parks since 1996.

Parks for People applications are assessed in two rounds. A first-round pass is given when HLF has endorsed outline proposals and earmarked funding. A first-round pass may also include an immediate award to fund the development of the project. Detailed proposals are then considered by HLF at second-round and as long as plans have progressed satisfactorily and according to the original proposal, an award for the project is confirmed.

About The Friends of St Peter’s

Launched in 2013, The Friends of St Peter's it is a Registered Charity (Registered Charity Number 1160314). The Friends encourage a wider appreciation of the church and its churchyards as a rich store of local and architectural history. Together with the Cowper Society they are responsible for the management of concerts, recitals and other events in St Peter’s Church. The Friends provide an opportunity for individuals, families, local institutions and businesses to become involved in the care and conservation of this irreplaceable heritage.

Further information

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n brothers' childhood park

Hirst Park in Ashington is where footballers Sir Bobby Charlton, Jack Charlton OBE and Jackie Milburn first began to play and train

Football returns to sporting heroes' childhood park