London’s West Norwood Cemetery to be revitalised

Grade II listed St Stephen's Chapel

£4.6million will save the West Norwood cemetery's listed monuments, improve its habitat for London’s urban wildlife and boost community activity.

One of London’s ‘Magnificent Seven’ cemeteries, West Norwood was established in 1836 to relieve the overcrowding in small parish graveyards caused by the huge increases in the capital’s population during the 19th century. The Grade II* listed cemetery was the first in the UK to be designed in the Gothic Revival style.

It has become run down in recent years and many of the cemetery’s 69 listed monuments are currently at risk. In 2018, two listed monuments were found to be at risk of collapse and a 5cm crack appeared in the Grade II* listed St Stephen’s Chapel.

With the National Lottery funding, 16 listed monuments will be removed from Historic England’s Heritage at Risk register.

Restoring and transforming the cemetery

Alongside the monument restoration work, two new entrances will be created and pathways and walls will be repaired. St Stephen's Chapel will be restored and the cemetery's lodge will be extended, transforming both into spaces for visitor and community activity.

West Norwood Cemetery is also an invaluable wildlife haven for London's urban critters, with bats, stag beetles, woodpeckers and tawny owls living among veteran oak and lime trees. Increased management will enhance the cemetery's biodiversity and see more people engaging with nature.

[quote=Ros Kerslake, HLF Chief Executive]"This National Lottery investment will safeguard West Norwood Cemetery's significant heritage and transform what it can offer as a space for urban nature and wildlife."[/quote]

Famous burials at the cemetery include:

- Mrs Isabella Beeton, author of *Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management*
- Charles W Alcock, founder of the FA Cup and the organiser of the first Test cricket match in England
- Paul Julius de Reuter, founder of Reuters News Agency
- Hiram Stevens Maxim, American-born British inventor of the Maxim machine gun
- James Henry Greathead, who pioneered the deep level tunnelling that created much of London's Underground system

The £4.6m National Lottery money has been jointly awarded by HLF and the Big Lottery Fund. Lambeth Council will also contribute £2m, bringing the total investment to £6.7m. Work will commence in April 2019 and last for five years.

HLF CEO Ros Kerslake, said: "This National Lottery investment will safeguard West Norwood Cemetery's significant heritage and transform what it can offer as a space for urban nature and wildlife. Whilst its stories and monuments shine a light on the past, the cemetery's worth as a community space means that it will play a valuable and expanded role today."

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