West Norwood Cemetery to be revived with National



One of West Norwood Cemetery’s at-risk monuments

One of London’s large ‘Magnificent Seven’ cemeteries, West Norwood was established in 1836 to relieve the overcrowding in small parish graveyards caused by the huge increase 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 is home to 69 listed monuments, many of which have become run down in recent years. In 2018, two were found to be at risk of collapse and a 5cm crack developed in the Grade II* listed St Stephen’s Chapel.

With the National Lottery funding, awarded jointly by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the Big Lottery Fund, 16 listed monuments will be removed from Historic England’s Heritage at Risk register.

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

Famous burials at the cemetery include:

- Hiram Stevens Maxim, American-born British inventor of the Maxim machine gun

- Paul Julius de Reuter, founder of Reuters News Agency
- William Marsden, founder of the Royal Marsden Hospital and the Royal Free Hospital
- Charles W. Alcock, founder of the FA Cup and the organiser of the first Test cricket match in England
- Mrs Isabella Beeton, author of Beeton's The Book of Household Management
- James Henry Greathead, who pioneered the deep level tunnelling that created much of London's Underground system

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

Lambeth Council and the Friends of West Norwood Cemetery will contribute £2.1m to the project, bringing the total investment to £6.7m. The project will commence in April 2019 and last for five years.

HLFs 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".

Prof Robert Flanagan, Chair of the Friends of West Norwood Cemetery, said: "This grant marks a highpoint in our work to preserve and enhance the cemetery. Whilst we can never reinstate all the lost memorials, in time the cemetery will be returned to something approaching its former appearance"

Cllr Sonia Winifred, Lambeth Council Cabinet Member for Equalities & Culture, said: "I'm excited to see the cemetery evolve into something for the whole community to explore – it's more than just a cemetery, it's a place to learn, relax, contemplate life and get some peace and quiet in the middle of our great city."

Notes to editors

National Lottery and public parks

Since 1996, more than £950m raised by National Lottery players has been used to support the regeneration, conservation and increased enjoyment of public parks and cemeteries across the UK. Find out more about how to apply .

About Big Lottery Fund

We are the largest community funder in the UK – we're proud to award money raised by National Lottery players to communities across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Since June 2004, we have made over 200,000 grants and awarded over £9billion to projects that have benefited millions of people.

We are passionate about funding great ideas that matter to communities and make a difference to people's lives. At the heart of everything we do is the belief that when people are in the lead, communities thrive. Thanks to the support of National Lottery players, our funding is open to everyone. We're privileged to be able to work with the smallest of local groups right up to UK-wide charities, enabling people and communities to bring their ambitions to life.

Further information

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