Brinkburn Denes Park

30/03/2010

Brinkburn Denes Park has been awarded almost £900,000* towards a major redevelopment plan thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the Big Lottery Fund (BIG) it was announced today.

The establishment of the Denes began by piecing various parts of existing landscape together during the 1920s, starting with the then named Cockerton Valley Gardens, a disused part of the Pease Estate. The Pease family, who donated the land, lived and worked in the area and were heavily, involved in the coal and manufacturing industries. They were also partners in the the founding of the Darlington and Stockton railway.

Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in the North East, Ivor Crowther, said: “As Spring is finally here it is the perfect time to get out into our parks. This vital lottery award will really transform Brinburn Denes making it far more user friendly to the local people. HLF and BIG are dedicated to the task of making sure our parks get the continued investment that they need to ensure that they are enjoyable and safe places to be, for everyone to enjoy.”

James Turner, Big Lottery Fund’s Head of the North East region, added: “Green spaces on our doorsteps, where people of all ages can relax, play and get involved with community events, have never been more important. The improvements to be made to Brinkburn Denes will be invaluable and we are delighted to be a part of it.”

The grant will be used to revitalise the existing landscape and introduce a full range of activities and events - including volunteering and training opportunities for young people. Better lighting and new entrances to the park will also be put in, improving access and creating a safer place for the community to enjoy.

A Darlington Council representative, said: “Being granted this award creates a fabulous opportunity for the community that lies close to the denes. The Friends groups have been working really hard with the Council for the past three years in order to improve the park and with this grant, are now able to see this hard work given a huge boost. The transformation that now will take place will let people in the community know that we all really care for this extreamly valuable part of Darlington’s green heritage.”

The Denes serve an area of terraced housing where local people have very little green space and community involvement has been an important theme in the planning of this project, ‘The Friends of the Denes’ group along with local residents put in place ideas for further development such as the volunteer action plan for the park.

Volunteering at the Denes is a great opportunity to get many local people involved in the revitalising of their park. There will be chances to learn new skills such as carrying out practical maintanence and improvement works, supporting events and activities in the park and becoming a ‘park champion’ acting as a channel between the local authority and residents to report and work on any issues that arise.

Notes to editors

* Today’s Stage Two awards are from the Parks for People programme which has a two-stage or two-round application process. The full grant has now been awarded following a successful Stage Two applications from these parks.

The other confirmed grants in this round include:

Bishop's Park and Fulham Palace Grounds, Fulham, London - £3.64m
Horniman Gardens, Forest Hill, London - £907,000
Victoria Park, Tower Hamlets, London - £4.5m
Brinkburn Denes Park, Darlington - £878,500
Dunwood Park, Oldham - £1.093m

The Parks for People programme uses Lottery funds to support the regeneration, conservation and increased enjoyment of public parks. The programme aims to improve the local environment and put parks firmly back at the heart of community life. In England the two Lottery Funds have been working in partnership from 2006 to 2009 to deliver a multi-million pound investment in public parks of £150m. Over the three years, the Big Lottery Fund (BIG) has invested up to £80m (in England only) with £70m coming from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the UK.

HLF is continuing to fund public park projects in 2010 with an investment of £20m each year. The next closing date for applications is 31st August 2010.

Parks for People programme grants range from £250,000 to £5m with two rounds of funding each year.

Every completed park project will be expected to achieve the annual prestigious Green Flag Award and in doing so demonstrate quality standards of care and upkeep.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported 33,900 projects, allocating £4.4billion across the UK including over £209million in the North East.

HLF has invested £525m in 530 historic public parks, gardens, squares and promenades right across the UK.

The Big Lottery Fund (BIG) rolls out close to £2million in Lottery good cause money every 24 hours, which together with other Lottery distributors means that across the UK most people are within a few miles of a Lottery-funded project. BIG, the largest of the National Lottery good cause distributors, has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since its inception in June 2004. BIG has invested more than £700million in wider environmental initiatives. www.biglotteryfund.org.uk

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