Lottery backs Elstree park plans

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Plans have been drawn up by park owner Hertsmere Borough Council (HBC) and the Countryside Management Service (CMS) to install extra play equipment, new welcome signs and an information board, and to restore and enhance the existing wildlife habitats in Composers Park in Elstree.

A £56,300 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) will help pay for the project. The council will also contribute £3,500.

Councillor Jean Heywood, Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Transport, said: “It is fantastic that the parks team at the council working in partnership with CMS have secured this grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

“Composers Park with its colourful wildflower meadows, hedgerows and trees, already provides a haven for wildlife and visitors alike.

“These proposals will help to enhance the enjoyment of this special - but unfortunately little-known - corner of Elstree and ensure it continues to serve as an important local resource into the future.”

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund East of England, said: “We are delighted that Lottery players' money will provide new entrances and interpretation signs, allowing more of the local community to access and enjoy this park, which is one of the few green spaces so important to the heritage of this area.”

Among the improvements due to take place are:

- Installing challenging play equipment for older children made of natural materials
- Creating a more welcoming and accessible entry to the park with welcome signs and an information board
- Restoring wildlife habitats through planting new native hedgerows and restoring old hedgerows, clearing invading scrub to bring back meadow wildflowers and thinning plantations to benefit birds
- Installing new benches around the park
- Constructing a new wildlife pond
- Running an events programme, including guided walks and volunteer opportunities
- Promoting the park locally to encourage more visitors

Members of the council’s parks team and CMS held a drop-in session in June to ask residents and visitors their views of the plans. Over 400 letters were sent to residents living around the park, along with a questionnaire.

The project received widespread support. Among the responses, people said the plans were ‘great’, ‘well-needed’ and would help ‘preserve the wildlife.’

If you would like to find out more about the project or speak to the parks team call 020 8207 7519 or email parks@hertsmere.gov.uk.

Notes to editors

The Countryside Management Service (CMS) works with landowners and communities to develop projects that enhance landscape and biodiversity, as well as encourage people to understand and enjoy the countryside. The service plays an active role in encouraging volunteer and local action groups to identify and become involved in projects.

Further information

HLF press office: Vicky Wilford on 020 7591 6046, email: vickyw@hlf.org.uk.

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