Page Park gets the go ahead

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The project aims to restore Page Park so that it forms the green 'heart' of Staple Hill where people go to enjoy high quality facilities, outdoor events and activities and to relax and meet other people in a safe, well managed and welcoming setting.

Development funding of £117,000 has been awarded to help South Gloucestershire Council and Friends of Page Park to progress their plans to apply for a full grant at a later date.

The project will restore the park's heritage features, provide a new café / community building and deliver a program of activities, events and training that will meet the needs of the local community whilst involving more, and a wider range of people with the park. The project will support a range of activities such as community and heritage celebration events, music in the bandstand, youth activities, get active in the park projects, training and skills development for local people and support for volunteers to help manage the park and much, much more.

The project will also restore many of the park's heritage features such as the stone boundary walls, gateways, clock tower shelter, and drinking fountain and replace the iron railings lost during the Second World War. There are also plans for a new community building / café with public toilets and upgrades to other buildings in the park. In addition a range of landscape improvements will be made that respect the park's Edwardian character and enhance biodiversity.

Page Park was originally part of the Hill House estate and was gifted to the community of Staple Hill by a local benefactor, Alderman Arthur William Page in 1910. The heritage of the park is vitally important to the local community as it is part of their social and cultural heritage. The community came together to form the Friends of Page Park in 1999. They are a very strong and committed group working to conserve and restore the park's heritage and without their tireless efforts, help and support it would not have been possible to secure Heritage Lottery funding.

Cllr Claire Young, Chair of Communities Committee, said: "We're delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Big Lottery Fund have given us this support. Page Park is the most important green space in Page Park and has been much loved by generations of local people since it was given to the people of Staple Hill in 1910. It is great to know that we are now a step closer to regenerating the park so that future generations can continue to enjoy it.

"Congratulations and thanks must got to the Friends of Page Park and the council officers who supported them for their hard work in mounting this bid. Page Park is valued by the residents of the Staple Hill area who gave wide support to this application."

Lorna Carter-Stephens, Chair of the Friends of Page Park, said: "We are absolutely thrilled that the park has received this award and we will now work hard to ensure the local community have their say on what activities they would like to see taking place in their park."

Carole Souter, Chief Executive of HLF, said on behalf of HLF and the Big Lottery Fund: "We're delighted to be able to provide this much needed support for Page Park, when it could not be more needed. Many public parks are really suffering in the current economic climate so this is particularly good news for the area. Parks are important to all of us and add so much to our quality of life. Page Park will help to bring the local community together and now, we can help

to secure its future."

Notes to editors

A first-round pass means the project meets our criteria for funding and we believe it has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award. On occasion, an applicant with a first round pass will also be awarded development funding towards the development of their scheme.

The Parks for People programme uses Lottery funds to support the regeneration, conservation and increased enjoyment of public parks and cemeteries. The programme aims to improve the local environment and put parks and cemeteries firmly back at the heart of community life. In England the two Lottery Funds have been working in partnership from 2006 to deliver a multi-million pound investment in public parks of £150m. Over the period 2006-2013 the Big Lottery Fund has committed up to £92m (in England only) and HLF has committed £140m to public parks across the UK.

HLF is continuing to fund public park projects in 2013/14 with an investment of £24m each year. The next closing date for applications is 31 August 2013. The Big Lottery Fund remains committed to working in partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in making a success of the Parks for People programme and will allocate £10m in 2013/14.

Since 1994, HLF has awarded a total of £585m to over 560 public parks across the UK.

The Big Lottery Fund, 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. It was established by Parliament on 1 December 2006.

South Gloucestershire Council has worked closely with Friends of Page Park to develop the first-round application for Heritage Lottery funding. As part of the work a wide ranging consultation was carried out with the local community to identify local needs and develop ideas for activities and events that will help address those needs.

Further information

HLF press office: Laura Bates on 020 7591 6027, email: lbates@hlf.org.uk.