Park friends get ready for a big year

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The friends group, formed in 2007, is made up of residents throughout the surrounding areas of Cambuslang who have a keen interest in promoting the park and making it a place that can be used not only by locals but by visitors to the area.

Over the course of 2010, the friends were delighted to be successful in numerous applications which they made for funding to improve the park.

The biggest of these came in October when the Heritage Lottery Fund announced £551,500 had been awarded to Cambuslang Park and, with matched funding from South Lanarkshire Council, £1.2 million will transform the amphitheatre allowing more events to take place, a new play area will be created and the woodlands will be brought back to a more natural state.

They also received £50,000 in August from Russian supermodel Natalia Vodianova's Naked Heart Foundation to create a new play area for children with special needs.

And numerous other grants were awarded over the course of the year for the benefit of local people, as just two weeks ago the Reformer reported they had received £1000 from the Royal Bank of Scotland through the RBS Community Fund, to organise more events.

Chairman, Norman Rae, said: "The year ahead promises to be a very exciting one, because we should see, from the late spring onwards, when things will be happening on the ground in the park.

"That will be a marvellous thing, both for the Friends of the Park and for the community as a whole.

"It will be the culmination of a number of years of hard concerted work put in by a lot of volunteers and agencies.

"This comes during a time of particular economic difficulties, like we have at present, so hopefully the things happening in the park will offer a bit of light in the midst of the gloom.

"We hope it will lift the spirits of everyone concerned and will certainly spur on the friends group to do even more, and raise more funds for what still remains to be done within the park."

The Friends of Cambuslang Park hold a variety of events from guided walks, to fun days, to a Halloween event, and hope to hold more with the extra funding.

Norman added: "We now have schools come along for scavenger hunts, beastie hunts and clean-ups.

"To encourage youth activities in the park we had a Loud and Live event where local youth bands, some for the first time, had a spot on stage.

"A Teddy Bear picnic was held for Love Your Parks week. This was organised in conjunction with the Cambuslang Park Strollers. In spring and autumn, we have a clean-up and planting day where we lift litter for an hour and then plant some bulbs."

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