

The funding will help take forward plans for the park, and support work on a second application for £4.2million of HLF funding to deliver the Seven Lochs vision.

The Seven Lochs Wetland Park will span the Glasgow City and North Lanarkshire boundary between Easterhouse and Coatbridge. The area can best be described as a ‘hidden heritage gem’, and HLF funding for the Seven Lochs Heritage Project will help highlight the fantastic range of history and nature in the area. As well as taking its name from the seven lochs in the area, the proposed park includes one of Glasgow’s oldest buildings, the medieval Provan Hall in Easterhouse, and the woodland walks of Drumpellier Country Park on the edge of Coatbridge. Added to this are five local nature reserves, Iron-Age archaeological sites and a network of paths.

The HLF award coincides with the launch of a new Seven Lochs project website, featuring photos, video and music created as part of the Sound Out @ Seven Lochs project. The Sound Out project, which was supported by Creative Scotland as part of the Year of Natural Scotland 2013, brought together local schools and music groups to create music to help promote the Seven Lochs, and raise awareness of the area’s amazing heritage.

A vision and plan for the Seven Lochs Wetland Park has been developed, setting out how the area’s heritage buildings and nature reserves could be protected, improved and brought together to create a new visitor attraction of national significance. New paths and visitor facilities are planned, along with a range of activities to help local people and visitors enjoy, learn about and help to improve the area’s heritage.

Over the next 12 months the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership (GCVGNP) will work with the Seven Lochs Partnership, which brings together Glasgow City Council, North Lanarkshire Council, The Conservation Volunteers Scotland, Forestry Commission Scotland, and Scottish Natural Heritage, to secure the funds needed to create the park. GCVGNP will also work with landowners, communities in and around the park, and local volunteers to develop plans for the park. Glasgow Building Preservation Trust will advise on restoration plans for the medieval buildings at Provan Hall.

Colin McLean, Head of  Heritage Lottery Fund Scotland, said: “Nature lies at the very heart of what makes Scotland special but the enormous pressures upon it mean that we have to approach its restoration and conservation on a bigger scale than ever before. HLF is delighted to help move the Seven Lochs project forward as it brings real cohesion to the natural and built heritage of the region, reconnecting people with the natural heritage which for many, lies overlooked on their doorstep.”

Scott Ferguson, Development Officer with Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green network partnership said: "This HLF award is fantastic news for the Seven Lochs area. It recognises that it is a great place for heritage and wildlife, and that the area should be protected and improved so that more people can enjoy and learn about it. We now want to work with local people to find out how plans for the Seven Lochs can help bring a range of benefits to communities in and around the park."

Bailie Liz Cameron, Executive Member for Development & Regeneration at Glasgow City Council said: "I am thrilled that HLF are supporting us with the establishment of the Seven Lochs Wetland Park. This park when completed will be a world class visitor attraction for Glasgow and the wider region. We also hope that the neighbouring communities in Easterhouse will, when the park is completed, be able to enjoy a wonderful new local resource which has the potential to have great health benefits to local people offering opportunities for walking, cycling and other outdoor pursuits.

"But there will also be huge benefits in terms of the protection of our city's local environment and the creation of new employment opportunities. A considerable amount of effort has been put in by partners and local communities to bring the project to this stage, and the support offered by HLF will allow us to continue this work and move forward to the next stage of delivery of the Wetland Park”.

Kenneth Wilson, Head of Environment and Estates, North Lanarkshire Council said: "The Seven Lochs area is a unique environment, home to a variety of plants, animals and insects. With appropriate management and development, it has the potential to become an excellent location for people to visit, enjoy and learn more about the local wildlife. The grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund is a very welcome boost which will allow us to progress plans for the area."

Callum Sinclair, TCV Scotland Operations Director said: "The award of HLF support to develop the Seven Lochs Wetland Park proposal is great news for the natural environment and for the people of the area who will now be involved in devising the range of exciting work that might take place there. The Conservation Volunteers look forward to being involved in this process as a member of the Seven Lochs Partnership, and also to making telling practical contributions to the use, management and improvement of the site in later years. Places like the Seven Lochs are hugely important in connecting local people to their local green space and to enhancing the appreciation of all the habitats and species that live on our doorsteps."

**Notes to editors**

The Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership works to make the Glasgow metropolitan region one of Europe's most attractive places to live, work and play.

The Conservation Volunteers Scotland is one of the largest, most dynamic and effective volunteering organisations in the UK. TCV works together with people and communities to transform their health, prospects and outdoor places for the long term. Through a network of 2,000 community groups, volunteers head out in all weathers to take part in a wide range of activities including planting trees and hedgerows, clearing footpaths and building steps and styles. For more information contact Anthony Morrow on 07827 308 149.

Scottish Natural Heritage is the government's adviser on all aspects of nature and landscape across Scotland. Our role is to help everyone understand, value and enjoy Scotland's nature now and in the future. SNH media is also now on Twitter at twitter.com/SNH_Tweets.

Glasgow Building Preservation Trust is a charity that works to rescue, repair, restore and rehabilitate historic buildings at risk across the city. We work in partnership with others to give redundant buildings a new purpose and return them to their communities.

For more information about the Seven Lochs Wetland Park, where to go and how to get involved visit the website.

**Further information**

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