UK’s original pleasure park Dreamland Margate re



Dreamland, the UK's original pleasure park, pictured in the 1960s

One of Britain’s most iconic and old-fashioned seaside institutions is back, having been re-built following the local community’s decade-long campaign to restore this much loved destination.

Dreamland will re-open with a bang with a host of celebrity guests and performers including headliner Marina and the Diamonds, Chas ‘n’ Dave and DJ Gemma Cairney (Radio 1) playing at the sell-out Opening Night Hullaballoo.

The new Dreamland is a unique vintage-style amusement park re-imagined by HemingwayDesign. The opening of the park, including rides, classic side shows, eateries and evocative spaces set within a landscape capable of hosting national festivals and major events has been made possible by a multi-million pound investment from local benefactors. Thanet District Council, Sands Heritage ltd, Heritage Lottery Fund and the Department for Culture Media and Sport’s Sea Change Programme have worked together to bring Dreamland back to Margate’s coastline, and boost the local economy for years to come. The project has been executed by architecture practice Ray Hole Architects and overlooked by the Spider Project Team.

Phase One of Dreamland includes 17 restored rides, as well as the roller disco, pleasure gardens, restaurants, food stalls, arcades and amusements from the golden age of the British seaside. Over 200 old rides and amusements have been upcycled and reimaged – transformed into the fabric of the new Dreamland.

Dreamland will play a significant role in the continued regeneration of Margate. Dreamland's Phase One opening alone has created 200 jobs in the local area. Further jobs will be announced as Phases Two, Three and Four are undertaken. An education centre on Dreamland will provide a further resource for the community.

[quote=Eddie Kemsley, CEO, Dreamland]"Through their hard work and the financial support we have received we have transformed a once derelict site back into the beating heart of Margate."[/quote]

Eddie Kemsley, CEO, Dreamland says**:** "There's so much more to come but for now the successful launch of Phase One is a testament to all those involved in this project and those campaigners that saved Dreamland for the nation. Through their hard work and the financial support we have received we have transformed a once derelict site back into the beating heart of Margate. Without their hard work none of this would have been possible. There is still much to do, but for now we can't wait to welcome our first visitors."

Stuart McLeod, Head of HLF South East, says:"As we head into summer, it's perfect timing for some holiday fun with Dreamland Margate opening its doors to a new generation of visitors – especially as this week, Lonely Planet has named Kent 'Europe's top spot for a family holiday'!. Our investment of nearly £6m is thanks to National Lottery players and we are tremendously grateful for the ongoing role they play in our work. Dreamland is a great example of how heritage-led regeneration can make a real impact on the local economy with Thanet alone benefiting from HLF support of over £17m."

Leader of Thanet District Council Cllr Chris Wells, says: "It's fantastic to see the culmination of so many years of hard work by so many people finally come to fruition. Dreamland is iconic and means so much to not only Margate and Thanet but Kent and beyond. Dreamland is synonymous with Margate's heyday and signals the continuation of this vibrant regeneration, already well underway with The Turner Contemporary and the revival of the old town. With the further phased opening of the amusement park and the council's development of the wider Dreamland site the future of Margate, and Thanet, looks brighter than ever."

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The Dreamland site is owned by Thanet District Council. The council, working with The Dreamland Trust has secured a funding package of £18million, which includes external funding of almost £6m from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and a Sea Change grant, to deliver the first phase of the project.

Further information

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Artist's impression of the Dreamland Parkscape

Heritage Lottery Fund awards Dreamland £3m