Funding boost to restore 200-year-old landscapes



Staunton Country Park plans achieve National Lottery support

Thanks to National Lottery players, a Parks for People grant of £122,700 will be used to develop detailed plans for a £2.85million second round bid*. If successful the project will invest over £4m in restoration of the historic estate, ahead of Staunton's bicentenary in 2019.

The County Council's Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Countryside, Councillor Andrew Gibson, was delighted with the news and said: "Staunton Country Park has a rich heritage and it's exciting to hear that the Regency character of the landscapes, follies and buildings will be revitalised for people of all ages to enjoy. Volunteers and learners will be placed at the heart of the Park, with improved access and new visitor facilities which will provide a welcome boost to the local economy."

The works across parts of the 193 hectare site will include:

- Restoring the Grade II* registered landscape, including Storey Gardens, the Lake, and network of trails
- Renovating follies such as the Beacon temple, Shell House, Fort and Chinese Bridge
- Transformation of the historic Victorian Coach House into a visitor centre providing information, orientation and interpretation
- Conversion of an estate workers' cottage into toilets

- Construction of a small café with seating, overlooking the lake
- A new training base for volunteers, including the Beacon Community Partnership
- Car park improvements

The development phase of Staunton's National Lottery funded project is likely to last just over a year, working with organisations such as Hampshire Gardens Trust, Highbury College, the Beacon Community Partnership and the newly-formed Friends of Staunton group - leading to a final application to HLF and BIG in March 2017. If successful, works will likely start in July 2017 and finish in March 2019 to mark Staunton's 200-year anniversary in 2019. Some areas of the country park will be temporarily closed to the public during restoration work.

Staunton's ornamental farm and gardens to the south of the country park are not included in the project, but they will benefit from the County Council's Country Parks Transformation Programme. This programme offers a once-in-a-generation-opportunity to transform Hampshire's country parks, improve visitor facilities and protect these key areas of countryside.

Today's news comes as part of a £32m funding announcement for parks and cemeteries across the UK. Explaining the significance of the support Stuart McLeod, Head of HLF South East said on behalf of HLF and BIG: "Our parks are where we play some of our first games, where we make some of our first discoveries and where we spend some of our best times with family and friends. However we use them, parks are an important part of life, which is why we're delighted to be investing National Lottery players' money in parks from Havant to Helensburgh to carry out vital restoration and create some wonderful opportunities for communities and wildlife."

Notes to editors

To date, more than £776m of money raised by National Lottery players has been invested in parks since 1996.

*Parks for People applications are assessed in two rounds. A first-round pass is given when HLF has endorsed outline proposals and earmarked funding. A first-round pass may also include an immediate award to fund the development of the project. Detailed proposals are then considered by HLF at second-round and as long as plans have progressed satisfactorily and according to the original proposal, an award for the project is confirmed.

Further information

HLF Press Office: Rebecca Lamm on tel: 020 7591 6207 and via email: Rebecca.Lamm@hlf.org.uk; or Katie Owen on tel: 020 7591 6036

BIG Press Office: Anupa Devi on tel: 020 7211 1888 and via email: Anupa.Devi@biglotteryfund.org.uk



Hirst Park is where the three Ashington youngsters - Bobby and Jack Charlton and Jackie Milburn - began their journey to footballing legend



n brothers' childhood park

Hirst Park in Ashington is where footballers Sir Bobby Charlton, Jack Charlton OBE and Jackie Milburn first began to play and train

Football returns to sporting heroes' childhood park