Love Parks Week: £30.7m National Lottery



Kearsney Abbey and Russell Gardens has recieved a funding boost

Coastal, country and city parks from Aberdeen to Dorset will be restored and transformed. Improvements for wildlife, opportunities for people and sustainable futures for parks are key themes of the projects.

The news comes at the start of Love Parks Week and ahead of HLF's second report on the current state of UK public parks, due to be published in September 2016.

In June 2014, the first State of UK Public Parks report found that declining resources and rising maintenance costs were putting our parks at risk. At the same time, parks were becoming increasingly important to people and communities.

It found that communities are beginning to take on a greater role in parks and that innovative ways of funding need to be found – matters at the heart of many of the projects being funded today.

During the projects receiving funding today, more than 6,000 volunteers and trainees will be involved in everything from archaeological excavations and river clean ups to prevent flooding, to gaining a qualification in woodland management or becoming a horticultural apprentice.

Cafes, sports facilities and rental space for small businesses and community groups are some of the areas being explored for generating income. Many of these parks are also looking to dedicated friends groups, trained volunteers and apprentice schemes to play a key part in the future maintenance of sites.

HLF's Chair Sir Peter Luff, on behalf of HLF and Big Lottery Fund, said: "It's clear that our parks are important to us in countless ways – from physical and mental wellbeing to a connection with nature and our heritage. It's also clear however that public parks must work in new ways to respond to the funding challenges they face and this investment, thanks to National Lottery players, will help them to do this.

"We're delighted to announce this funding today, especially in time for the tenth Love Parks Week, and look forward to a bright future for these parks."

A closer look at two of the parks receiving funding today:

Bailey Hill Park, Mold, Wales

At the heart of this 1920s park lie the ruins of an 11th-century motte-and-bailey castle. Overgrown trees and roots however are damaging the ruins and obscuring them from view. Despite being at the heart of the historic market town, the declining condition of the park means it is underused and often subject to vandalism.

Flintshire Museums Service has received initial support to: make much-needed repairs to the park's infrastructure, improve the management of trees to benefit wildlife and the ruins, and involve the community in its heritage and future through community excavations, training programmes and a range of other activities.

North Marine Park, South Shields

Much-loved but run-down, North Marine Park is set at the mouth of the River Tyne and on the South Shields coastline. The project, led by South Tyneside Council, will revive and repair the park, reinstate its famous grottos and refurbish the pavilion to reintroduce traditional park games. An unused bowling shelter will be converted into a café and a planting scheme will be put in place.

Training opportunities, particularly for young people, will be offered to build skills in conservation, horticulture and customer services. The park's incredibly active friends group will continue to play a key role in the future of the park.

The parks receiving funding today

HLF and Big Lottery Fund joint grants in England

- Durlston Country Park - £983,000 of initial support and £82,800 development funding
- Faversham Recreation Ground - £1,719,800 of initial support and £117,800 development funding
- Great Linford Manor Park, Milton Keynes - £3,483,000 of initial support and £321,200 development funding
- Headstone Manor Recreation Park, Harrow - £1,356,600 of initial support and £229,700 development funding
- Marble Hill Park, Twickenham - £4,356,000 of initial support and £275,600 development funding
- North Marine Park, South Shields - £2,644,000 of initial support and £194,000 development funding
- Beddington Park, Wallington - £3,009,400

- Bowring Park, Knowsley - £1,848,500
- Hunstanton Heritage Gardens - £993,900
- Kearsney Abbey & Russell Gardens, Dover - £3,115,000
- Wyndham Park, Grantham - £818,100

HLF-only funded grants in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

- Aden Country Park, Mintlaw - £1,399,500, initial support and £149,500 development funding
- Bailey Hill Park, Mold - £961,700, initial support and £43,900 development funding
- Levengrove Park, Dumbarton - £2,772,100
- Parc Cefn Onn, Cardiff - £459,900
- Warrenpoint Municipal Park, Newry - £850,000

Further information

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State of UK Public Parks 2014