

#ParksMatter

07/09/2016

Action is needed to avert a crisis that will undermine more than two decades of investment in the UK's public parks, according to a new HLF report.

Thanks to National Lottery players, our parks are in great shape. With the Big Lottery Fund, we've invested over £850million in more than 800 of the UK's public parks, improving facilities, renovating historic features and making them more popular than ever.

But according to our new State of UK Public Parks 2016 report, there is a growing deficit between the rising use of parks and the declining resources available to manage them.

[quote=Ros Kerslake, HLF Chief Executive]"Put simply, parks are not a luxury."[/quote]

Two years on from our first report into the state of UK parks, the downward trend in condition and maintenance we predicted in 2014 looks set to continue and many of our precious parks and green spaces face an uncertain future.

We surveyed park managers across the country. It revealed that 95 per cent of them expect further budget cuts over the next three years, which they think will lead to a decline in quality, skills and morale, and a rise in charges, complaints and the closure of facilities.

We all need to act now.

We are calling for continued commitment to parks from local authorities, with research showing their leadership has a significant positive impact. But there also needs to be collaboration across the parks sector, business, park users and local and central government to develop new ways to fund and manage parks.

Ros Kerslake, HLF Chief Executive said: "Put simply, parks are not a luxury. They are essential to our increasingly busy urban lives and thanks to National Lottery players they've never been in such great shape.

"But these are financially tough times and if we are to successfully halt the onset of decline in our parks and avoid wasting this investment, we need to come together now to find innovative and sustainable models of funding and maintaining these highly valued community spaces."

Find out more by reading our [Parks Matter feature](#).



Public parks face decline