

The power of partnership: Boultham Park, Lincoln



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Summary

Boultham Park in Lincoln is one of 135 projects funded by the £254m Parks for People restoration programme, run by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund. Boultham Park is one of the three principal parks in Lincoln, alongside Hartsholme Country Park and the city's Arboretum. A partnership between the local authority and a learning disability charity received funding from the first round of funding for the Parks for People restoration programme (the restoration project). The partnership developed to include the local Wildlife Trust and close involvement of the Boultham Park Advisory Group and other active volunteers in the community to receive funding from the second round of funding (the Lake project).

The main aspects of the restoration project included:

- An accessible café for park visitors
- An education centre for students with learning disabilities
- A new glasshouse housing a mini-garden centre
- Restoration of the park's fountain, bandstand and sundial
- A visible outline of the old hall's footprint with interpretation board
- Improvements to paths, bridges, furniture, bins and signage

The evaluation set out in this report took place in winter-spring 2020 through a series of interviews with the project team and park users and a survey of local residents. Other data sources were provided by the project team, including photographs, and are included in the analysis.

The improvements that the Parks for People funding have made to the park have created benefits for the local community, including:

- **Improving mental health and wellbeing:** The changes to the park have made it feel safer and therefore a place people can spend time to 'unwind'. Volunteering has provided safe and positive opportunities for people to improve their mental health
- **Bringing people together:** The new active hub in the park allows people to spend longer in the park and permits more organised indoor and outdoor activities
- **Engaging with nature:** The Lake project directly addresses how people, particularly young people, connect with nature
- **Reducing inequalities:** The improvements have meant the restoration of a safe, accessible and welcoming park for all residents
- **Supporting the local economy:** A café and education centre which provide a regular and active presence in the park as well as employment and training opportunities

The partnership approach taken was an important factor for the success of the project, and the increasing involvement of the local community has led to a wider range of activities happening.

Learning points include:

- Restoration projects can turn parks into a destination
- Partners holding true to the shared vision is crucial

- Flexibility in how the project develops is important for its success
- It is also important to have flexibility for the day-to-day activities in the park
- An ongoing understanding of disability in the park can help understand how accessible it really is
- Knowledge and resources should be shared with other parks to ensure wider learning and benefits
- It is invaluable to take the time to learn lessons and apply them
- Capacity building is an important building block for the sustainability of the project and its life beyond
- Taking a strategic vision at city level can help achieve success in park projects

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Parks for People was a programme by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund to revitalise historic parks and cemeteries. Since 2006 the programme has contributed £254 million to 135 projects across the UK. It is the successor programme to two other funding schemes, the Urban Parks Programme and the Public Parks Initiative. Since 1996, over £900m of The National Lottery Heritage Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund funding has been awarded to more than 900 UK public parks for capital works and public engagement activities.

This case study is part of a national evaluation of the Parks for People programme. The evaluation is being undertaken by the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (CRESR) at Sheffield Hallam University, along with colleagues at the University of Sheffield and Urban Pollinators Ltd. As part of the evaluation, the research team first conducted a review of the academic evidence on the social benefits of parks and urban green spaces. This document, *Space to Thrive*, was published by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund in January 2020. Following this research the evaluators examined six Parks for People projects, conducted at different times in different locations, to consider the impact of the funding and the lessons for local and national policy. These are:

- Alexandra Park, Manchester
- Boultham Park, Lincoln
- Grosvenor and Hilbert Park, Tunbridge Wells
- Myatt's Field, Brixton
- Saughton Park, Edinburgh
- Stafford Orchard, Quorn, Leicestershire

This report starts by introducing Boultham Park and the work done there. It then looks at the impact of the Parks for People project, framing the discussion by referring to the six types of benefit identified in the *Space to Thrive* report. It then considers some opportunities and challenges for the future, learning points from the project, and outlines the overall difference it has made.

1.2 About Boultham Park

Ask the people involved in the Boultham Park restoration project, and every one of them talks about the *power of its partnership*. Working together was new for all the partners involved but is now a principle that they all actively follow. The principal partnership was between the City of Lincoln Council and a Learning Disability charity called Linkage. Linkage is a Community Trust¹ which supports people with a range of learning disabilities, ranging from mild to severe, as well as people with multiple disabilities. Linkage also provides further education on 3 college campuses across Lincolnshire, including Boultham Park. The partnership also involved a large number of active volunteers in the community, and, later, the local Wildlife Trust. The project was driven by a long-term vision for the city's parks which was developed and nurtured

¹ As a Community Trust, Linkage is a not-for-profit organisation which uses any income for betterment of the community.

by the Council and gained local political and public support, even though there was no actual funding behind it for a long time. When that vision and support was linked up with “partners who all had the same vision and intent for the project early on”, the determination and capacity of the partnership paid off, leading to the awarding of two pots of The National Lottery Heritage Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund funding for Boultham Park.

Boultham Park is one of the three principal parks in Lincoln, alongside Hartsholme Country Park and the city’s Arboretum. All three have distinct characteristics and Boultham Park is a special place for Lincolnians. Many of them have their own – or have inherited – memories of boating on the lake in the 1950s. Back then, it was described as a place where you would bump into courting couples at every turn! Its rich history dates back to its establishment as a 19th century family home, Boultham Hall, which would later be home to convalescing soldiers during the First World War, and the site of British military tank development. In fact, it was Boultham Park locals who gave us the word ‘tank’ which they used as shorthand for the longer, secret name of ‘water carriers for the people of Mesopotamia’. The estate grounds that were not sold off for housing after the War were bought by the City Council in 1929, and later the park played its part in the Second World War as part of the Dig for Victory campaign. The Hall, which had been opened after enlargement in 1874 and once was the place for galas, fetes and garden parties, was demolished in 1959. And except for the original pediment and steps, and a semi-derelict coach house, there were few clues in the park to give even a hint of what had been there before the restoration project. As one project partner says: ‘There was nothing and that was just going to get worse...in another generation, it’d be forgotten’. The National Lottery Heritage Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund’s Parks for People scheme has helped restore key heritage features in the park, bringing the park back into the collective memory of its local residents and visitors from around Lincolnshire and beyond.

This has been done by standing firm to the long-standing vision held by locals and the council. There needed to be more reasons for visitors to come to the park. The vision was only implemented when a Council project partner heard about how Linkage’s students were helping to maintain a bowling green at Mablethorpe, east Lincolnshire. This was the spark that ignited the partnership between Linkage and the Council which would help regenerate Boultham Park and establish a new campus for college students who could be active participants in the park’s long-term management. It also led to a strengthening of the relationship between the Council and the local community, specifically Boultham Park Advisory Group. BPAG was formed by the City of Lincoln Council back in the early 2000s and is made up of local residents, key partners and local businesses with an active interest in activities in the park.

This report looks at why Boulton Park’s popularity continues to rise and how the Parks for People programme has contributed to sustaining the benefits of Boulton Park for its users and wider community.

1.3 The park and the local area

Boultham Park lies to the south of Lincoln city. It is one of three main parks in Lincoln, all of which are Victorian in their origins. The Arboretum is considered the most formal with its promenades, stonework and railings. Hartsholme Country Park is the most natural and comprises a designated Local Nature Reserve (Swanholme Lakes). Boultham Park lies somewhere between the two, comprising areas of both formal and informal characters. The park is located within a relatively affluent part of Lincoln but is immediately surrounded by pockets of deprivation to its south and east, one of which (Moorland ward) is in the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in England.

The Boultham Estate was originally home to the Ellison family. It was given to Colonel Richard Ellison by his father (of the same name) as a wedding present in 1830. The 17-hectare park is bounded on three sides by housing and the river Whitham runs along its eastern border. Originally, the Hall and its grounds covered over 500 hectares (c. 1830) but much of this area has since been built on. The site of the demolished Hall lies in the formal and central part of the park where the fountain, bandstand and playground are found. To the north are bowling greens, a putting green and grass tennis courts as well as St Helen's church and graveyard which are just outside the park's boundary. The Lake, which was designed in 1851, lies in the south of the park and is flanked by woodland, which is particularly dense as one moves north-east, constituting approximately 40% of the park's area. There is a wide selection of trees, including black poplar, in the ornamental woodland which is attributed to the plant knowledge of the Ellison family.

To the north and south east of the park boundary, there are allotment sites which are abutted by the River Whitham. There are seven entrances into the park and footpaths throughout, linking to the river on the east and housing in Boultham Moor to the west. The park has a local feel to it in the way it is somewhat hidden from view, surrounded by residential neighbourhoods (built on the original parkland which was sold for housing) and the river. You need to know it's there to find it. For a visitor, the main gate gets somewhat lost in the health centre and community hub buildings and there is a sense of detachment of the park's original lodge buildings, now privately rented, along the park's boundary.



Main gate to Boultham Park. Photo: Nicola Dempsey.

Boultham has always been a popular park serving a wide range of local users. Historically, (military) brass bands would play regularly at the bandstand which has been in the park for over 80 years. Music would play from the bandstand during the Second World War's 'Holidays at Home' when all non-essential travel was discouraged and residents took their holidays at their local park. The park is fondly remembered by

an older resident (visitor to the park for 83 years) for its mass of brightly coloured bedding plants located all around the park, which were grown in the park's greenhouses.



Bedding plants in the park, 1973. Photo: Boultham Park Digital Archive.

Part of the park's popularity is that it lies en route between housing and a nearby secondary school. Park surveys conducted before the restoration showed that a lot of people use it as a cut-through. In the early 2000s there were increasing instances of anti-social behaviour, including graffiti and vandalism and the park was considered by some to be an anti-social and unsafe. One resident whose house overlooks the park said: 'My wife and I would not walk through the park of a night time to go to the shops on the front....the level of anti-social behaviour was [what] stopped people coming into the park'. While a popular park with die-hard users (e.g. dog walkers), something innovative was required to get local residents to reconnect with the park.

1.3 About the restoration project

In 2011, the City of Lincoln Council, working in partnership with Linkage Community Trust, were awarded a grant of £2.7m from The National Lottery Heritage Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund's Parks for People programme. This was supplemented by financial contributions from both partners and local fundraising to bring the total value of the project to £4.1m. Work started in 2013 and continued until 2020. The funding covered the restoration of key infrastructure and creation of important new features in Boultham Park, including:

- A new café for park visitors with extra toilet facilities.
- Conversion of the original coach house and stables into an education centre for Linkage students which opened in 2017. The education centre is available for

booking by local groups, and has a Changing Places facility (a fully accessible toilet²) available for public use.

- A new glasshouse housing a mini-garden centre for selling plants which is open to visitors/ customers as well as training for Linkage students.
- Restoration of the park's fountain, bandstand and sundial.
- A clear and visible outline of the old hall's footprint with interpretation board.
- Improvements to a number of paths and bridges within the park.
- CCTV and lighting near the bowls club and playground, and overlooking the bandstand and events space.
- Improved and new park furniture, bins and signage.
- Improvement to some of the park boundaries and gateways, including the main gates.
- Soft landscaping work and tree works including selective removals where appropriate, improving sightlines.



Boutham Park in the 1930s. Photo: Boutham Park Digital Archive

There was also an extensive activity plan (to the value of almost £200,000) which was implemented by the Activities Project Officer (employed by Linkage) to engage with the local and wider community. Activities were often run with partners and included:

- Park celebrations including 'Our Park Day' and the regenerated Park's opening ceremony in 2018 (on the park's 89th birthday)
- Pop Up Parks Fest with Lincoln Performing Arts Centre
- Live music events including "Bandstand through the Decades"

² A Changing Places toilet designed to be completely accessible, providing sufficient space and equipment for people who are not able to use the toilet independently

- Victorian Winter Wonderland
- Bioblitz with Lincolnshire Rivers Trust
- National Citizen Service training
- Organised runs including Santa Run and Bubble 5K
- Boultham Bark, organised by National Citizen Service participants
- Organised walks, e.g. Christmas walks, Mini-explorers (pre-school children)
- Quilt making, the result of which was on permanent display in the café
- Activities hosted at the Education Centre including Photography exhibitions and Local History Days and Rock painting sessions
- Activities specifically for kids including sessions on making junk animals and bottle rockets, and den building
- Free Community Organising course with Community Organisers Ltd
- Free Autism Event
- Regular Park Tidy Ups and litter picking
- Christmas Craft Session, wreath making workshops
- 6 issues of the Boultham Park Beacon magazine

Improvements to the Lake were also part of the restoration project, but – as outlined in a planning committee report to the council (2019) – “as the bid was developed, and given the financial cap on the initiative, it became clear that funding the restoration of the lake and its immediate surrounds was not going to be affordable at that time, as was originally hoped.”

This was a significant blow to the local community. Some locals – in BPAG at the time – aired their frustrations publicly about the change to the project and its unchallenged acceptance by the council. This sentiment was not shared by all BPAG members at the time and some members who were unhappy with the progress of the project left the group altogether. A project partner at the council describes how the team “were convinced that we didn't have the choice doing the Lake and there was frustration in the community that we weren't arguing. But we weren't in a position to argue because [we didn't have] another million pounds and that's what we needed”. However, the project team stuck to their overall vision for the park. Exploratory work done on the Lake as part of the restoration project was used with advice taken from Heritage Lottery Fund contacts to submit a separate funding application for ‘The Lake project’.

1.4 About the Lake project

In 2020, working in partnership with Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and the Boultham Park Advisory Group, the City of Lincoln Council was awarded £658,700 from The National Lottery Heritage Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund for the Lake project (2020-23) which has a total value of £1.17m. Continuing the vision of the overall restoration of the park, access to the Lake will be improved, as will the biodiversity in and around the Lake, and lost activities such as boating will be reintroduced. The Lake project involves the:

- Installation of aeration equipment to stop and slowly remove silt build-up and improve the lake water quality
- Restoration and improvement of the lake edges

- Understorey planting around the Lake margin, on the island and in the woodland
- Installation of bird and bat boxes
- Improvement of the surface around the Beacon next to the Lake
- Introduction of more seating including picnic tables
- Creation of a viewing platform, pontoon and fishing pegs
- Improvement of footpaths around the Lake
- Provision of access for occasional boating
- Installation of public art with interpretations about the wildlife, habitat and history of the lake



Boultham Park Lake, early 1900s. Photo: Boultham Park Digital Archive

Like its predecessor, there is a significant element of community engagement in the Lake project, which emphasises biodiversity, habitat management and community events. These activities will be aimed at encouraging a wider range of people to get involved, particularly targeting non-speaking Linkage residents, children, teenagers, older people, Linkage students and potential volunteers. Some activities have already begun, including consultation on the proposed artworks around the Lake, a drop-in session about the tree removals and replanting and sessions for volunteers planting trees. The Lake project is ongoing but has always been an important part of the vision for regenerating the Park. While this report does not focus explicitly on the Lake project, it is referred to widely throughout.

1.5 What happened after the restoration

When the Parks for People restoration project finished, there was no ringfenced funding for Boultham Park. The park continues to be supported by the City of Lincoln Council's parks service and its maintenance contractor, Continental Landscapes. The Activities Project Officer employed through Parks for People was not replaced. There will be an equivalent Activities Project Officer for the duration of the Lake Project.

The Boutham Park Advisory Group (BPAG) are very active in the park and they organise a number of events ranging from the large-scale, annual and free Boutham Summer Fair (which has been running for 28 years) to regular litter picks, and supporting community members to use the park such as the weekly Mini-explorer toddler group. Following personnel changes in event organisation, BPAG made a profit from last year's summer fair. BPAG have used this to provide (pump-priming) funds to the Arboretum Advisory Group to help organise events, as well as sharing expertise from the successful annual event.

Other principal users of the park are Linkage staff and students. Having Linkage's college campus adjacent to the park means that it is used as part of skills-based learning that Linkage learners develop to lead as independent lives as possible. The Linkage partner outlined how "the outdoor space is integrated into their learning, including doing visitor surveys in the park, enabling students to develop their social skills and it then enables them to analyse some data... it's like a real life learning environment so project based learning is possible and really good". They also get involved in planting in the glass house, as well as weeding and general grounds maintenance in the park.

Linkage also runs the new café which is popular amongst park users. Alongside paid staff, Linkage provides work experience opportunities so students with learning disabilities can also develop their skills there.

Linkage's Education Centre has rooms available for hire and has hosted events such as photography exhibitions, Local History days and rock painting sessions for children. Linkage can access additional funding as they operate as a training facility, and can subsidise the café if it doesn't always generate a profit. The Council did not want the café as an ongoing concern: 'if we were just trying to run a commercial café, we would really struggle - they struggle [with a café] at the Arboretum'.

Income generation from the park is not a current priority: the majority of all events in the park are free at the point of entry, or incur a charge to cover the event costs. Having said this, there is some discussion in the Council about generating income from commercial events in the park, suggesting that this might be something that will happen in the future. While Lincoln has not suffered the same drastic reductions in parks funding as many other local authorities, they are subject to saving cycles in light of declining support from central government and increasing demands for services.

2. Involving the community

From the early 2000s, the Council has been instrumental in gaining formal and active community support for the regeneration of Lincoln's parks. One way it did this was by supporting each park's community group to be an Advisory Group – a formal body that gives **advice** to the council – rather than a Friends Group – which is often formed to campaign around a **problem** in a park. This is based on seeking advice from all members of the Boutham Park Advisory Group (BPAG) which is underpinned in their Constitution by a 'one interest-one vote' system. As a Council partner explained: 'if they get a thorny issue and they're going to vote on it to form an opinion then it's made up of a mixed range of people. So you can't end up with a whole load of people who are just dog walkers in the park. There might be a category for dog walkers but there's only one person who gets a vote. And then if the rest of them want to have a discussion around it that's fine, but they only get one vote.' The interests currently represented in the Group include fishing syndicates, bird watchers, dog walkers, ramblers, schools, faith organisations and the police.

The thrust behind the restoration project was the combination of the Council's long-term vision for the park, exemplified by the Council's project partner: 'we knew we wanted to do something in the park but we didn't know how'. When the partnership was forged with Linkage, the possibility of large-scale funding for the park became clearer. But this was a two-way partnership, and not one that initially relied on close community involvement in the decision-making. As one BPAG volunteer puts it: 'BPAG were never invited – for all the right reasons – to be at the table in the negotiating stage for the first phase [restoration project]... My opinion is [BPAG] weren't asked because it just brought negativity to the table.' Changes in BPAG's membership have meant that the Group is now actively involved in the Lake Project, and invited to every project meeting, demonstrating a clear strengthening of the partnership.

While not a financial contributor, BPAG constitute an important partner in the project, devoting a significant number of volunteer hours to the restoration project. The original estimate of volunteer time as set out in the project application was exceeded by over 30%. This included formal training such as first aid, risk assessment and training for working with children. Some of this time has been given up by incredibly motivated and enthusiastic volunteers. Some of these have been awarded the Mayoral Medal for outstanding contribution, commitment and dedication to the Project and have developed their own professional skills through their volunteering activity. Unlike the restoration project, the Lake project contractors will be working with volunteers from the outset. The hiring selection criteria will require contractors to show how they will work effectively with volunteers and how 'it will be managed as part of the contract'.

The training that volunteers undertook was funded through the restoration project to allow them to work on the events organised by the Activities Project Officer, and those beyond the funding timeframe. BPAG members work closely with the Council's Volunteer Coordinator in the activities they organise. As one BPAG member puts it: '*People like structure. People like fun. People coming on a litter pick don't want to think they've got to bring the wheelbarrow or the plastic bags. They want to know that when they arrive it is all there for them.*' A Council colleague echoed this: '*if you make it relevant, then people...will find the time. The reason we get the older demographic is because they've got plenty of spare time. Yet we all find time to do something and indulge in our hobbies or interests....*'. Another Council interviewee commented on the Lake project and the activities planned aimed at getting young people involved in volunteering. Through '*the biodiversity side of things, especially when it comes to cutting up bits of wood or the stumpery...some of the young people who are walking through the park will see something a bit exciting and get engaged*'. The Volunteer Coordinator described having a cohort of at least eight committed volunteers who would get involved in activities in the park on any given day. As well as BPAG

volunteers, people doing community payback as part of the probation service form part of the volunteer body in the park, as do young adults doing activities as part of the National Citizen Service and the Prince's Trust, which all demonstrates a strong relationship between the volunteers and the Council.

3. Improving health and wellbeing

The strong relationship that volunteers have with the council, as well as their commitment to Boutham Park is clear to see in this example cited by the Volunteer Coordinator:

'I've got one guy...who unfortunately very sadly is suffering very badly with dementia now but he's been with that group for two years...he's just lost his driving licence but I'm now dropping him back at home on a Wednesday and he's getting a taxi and trying to keep it going.'

The Council's Volunteer Coordinator also discussed some of the long-term benefits people have experienced from volunteering in the park:

'I've had guys come to me who haven't left their flats or houses for six months. They've been made redundant and become almost hermits. And within five or six weeks in our groups, they can be completely different people. We've had great successes of people going on to get full time jobs or to do other volunteering - really positive results and I think that's something that's easily overlooked and that's very difficult to put a value on.'

BPAG members describe volunteering as being good for one's physical and mental health:

'by volunteering, you're doing it for so many different reasons. You are out in the fresh air, you're doing physical work sometimes which is good for you and you're meeting people when you might not normally meet them, and it all comes together. But doesn't it always all come together in open spaces? Fresh air, movement, meeting people, community.'

Park users come to the park to 'de-stress, to unwind, to have a minute' according to one Council partner. For one volunteer, the park provides, 'places to sit and clear your head, exercise, take the kids to burn off energy....[it's] that bit of breathing space we all need.' Park users described Boutham as 'delightful' and many mentioned how this was where they come for their regular walks 'for our health'. Others put out seeds in the woodland, to wait and watch the birds and take photographs.

The park provides quiet spaces for users including Linkage students. The Linkage project partner explained that events such as the Park's re-opening event can be off-putting: one student said, *'it's too noisy...I won't be able to come because there will be too many people'*. This highlights the need to recognise *'hidden disabilities. It's the quiet spaces because parks are so sensory, leaves, trees, they're great for being out there and doing things....but you need to be able to hear the birds sing and water or nothing at all'*.

CCTV, improved lighting and path improvements mean that park users feel safer in the park than they did in the past when anti-social behaviour was a significant problem. The café and education centre – and the activities hosted there – provide reasons for people to come and stay in the park for longer than they were able to before. As one park user says, *'there was no shelter before in Boutham Park if you got caught in the rain.'* The provision of toilets and other facilities were appreciated and most survey respondents (65%) agreed that this has improved since the funding. One volunteer captured this by saying that *'with the new benches and café make it more accessible to people of all ages and fitness'*. This is further supported by BPAG which organises activities which are *'bringing the people who might not have been connecting with the park or connecting with nature and it enhances that sense of wellbeing.'*

This focus on health is shared by the council partners who described how the City of Lincoln Council 'is moving towards wellbeing and towards physical and mental good health' and they consider the ongoing activities in the park as positive contributions. A parkrun was set up here after the restoration project started, which has spread knowledge about the park. The parkrun welcomes 450-500 runners every Saturday, including some of the Linkage staff and students.

The Lake project will improve the water quality and desilt the Lake, permitting more direct access to the water which is currently off-limits to the public. The Lake forms an important part of people's connection to Boultham Park. As one BPAG member explains:

'everybody we talked to, said "Is there going to be fishing and boating back?" so you're going to introduce back to this park activities that the grandparents and great-grandparents did so you going to now be engaging people back to doing activities that will keep them outdoors and keep them doing things.'

4. Bringing people together

Boultham had a park keeper who had been in post since 1972 and was responsible for the upkeep of the lawn tennis courts, bowling greens and putting pitch. It's felt that his retirement in 2017 marked the end of an era and coincided with what one volunteer described as an 'upswing in involvement' from the community.

Community members call Boultham 'a people's park'. One volunteer stated: 'the park has always been popular but now it has more of a sense of community.' Through the events funded by Parks for People, another volunteer described how 'people really discovered their own park that they lived on the doorstep of, and having all those different things – a lot of them heritage-based – they allowed people to integrate more with the park in terms of heritage and stuff'. Those events which brought something different to the park were appreciated by users. An example of this was the Bandstand through the Decades events, facilitated by having a power supply at the bandstand. As the Linkage project partner stated,

'those kind of events get people to the park and...sometimes you have to create a reason for people to do something'. For the project partners, it is also about keeping up a momentum and doing things in the park on a regular basis which are varied so that 'people will look and say "Oh, what's on there?" Ah yes, there's something for me to do'.

As one volunteer put it: the changes in the park mean that 'there are more options of what we can do there'.

The majority of events and activities that were put on were successful. Notable examples include the Bandstand through the Decades music events, remembered by one volunteer: *'the 1950s one, when we got folks coming dressed in 50s gear, it was fabulous'*. The re-opening of the park was another big, successful event because it coincided with FA Cup Day and Prince Harry's wedding. The Linkage project partner recalls: *'in the daytime we had things for the family and a big screen so people could watch the wedding...it was nice weather...and then in the evening they put the FA Cup...it was superb that opening'*. Such events have led to a wider demographic now using the park. One BPAG volunteer describes how *'you walk around now and there's lots of different voices...[there are] Eastern Europeans [who] like to promenade. You see many more of them coming in of a weekend'*.



Boutham Park - Opening Celebration - May 2018. Photo: Beth Pritchard, Boutham Park Digital Archive.

One notable operational failure was *'the Christmas winter Wonderland which had some good publicity [and] some bad because the ice didn't work! That probably was the least popular event, but had the most people there – not the ideal situation to be in'*, remembers one BPAG volunteer.

The improved bandstand (with power supply), lighting in the park, the new café, Education Centre and toilet facilities (including the Changing Places toilet) have made a big difference to the types of events that now happen in the park. While there is not the capacity to organise events at the same volume or scale as when an Activities Project officer was in post (or will be in the Lake Project), park events are regular. They range from bat nights with the Lincolnshire district bat society and St Helen's Church, to music events at the Bandstand and organised volunteering activities.

The new facilities in the park have increased the reasons for people coming to the park. According to one volunteer, *'the restoration of the bandstand makes it a great focal point and popular meeting point'*. The café is well-used, particularly by dog walkers who come to the park and often will visit the café for breakfast (the bacon butty and traditional fry-up breakfast are the most popular orders followed by afternoon cake!). There have been some issues with owners of large dogs assuming they could bring them inside the café (which is common in many of Lincoln's dog-friendly cafés and pubs). One dog-owning local park user described it as not as dog-friendly as the Hartsholme Park café. To address these issues, a serving hatch was retrofitted so people can now eat with their pets at the robust benches outside the café. The possibility of a retractable awning is currently being investigated so that people can sit under shelter while the café is open, without attracting anti-social behaviour after hours. On quiet days, the café runs a board games club once a week.

There are some issues with the café around access which is difficult for users with mobility issues. Partly this is because of changing needs of the Linkage students who live in the sheltered accommodation. Previously, they would not tend to have their own cars but today they are more mobile and some have bought large cars on their disability living allowance. Linkage staff drive the students' cars and staff often come to work in their own cars, meaning there is no available parking close to the café.

The Changing Places toilet is widely described as a positive addition. However, it is felt to be in the wrong place. The Linkage project partner explains:

'in hindsight, the accessible Changing Places toilet should have been attached to the café...because if someone needs to use it and it is available, then someone has to be available in the café to come and open up this [Education centre] building. It's not ideal. You can't just give the user the key – it actually makes it less accessible'.

In addition, the Changing Places toilet takes up a lot of space in a teaching environment which Linkage staff believe could be better used. There were other examples of a limited understanding by the project contractors of the client group – that is, Linkage students with learning disabilities. The safeguarding needs of the client were not fully thought through when multiple entrances and exits to the building were installed but, in practice, never used. A small lift in the building *'works architecturally, but you have to press [for the entire ascent or descent]... your finger on the button to get up and down. If you are disabled, in a wheelchair, you can't go up in the lift on your own'*. The lift is an example of how no one person was responsible for a facility being installed which was essentially not fit for purpose. As the Linkage partner puts it:

'...people come to us as independence specialist college to learn independence skills, to live independently in the community. And then we have things like the lift [that they can't use]. That's not an architect's fault because they didn't understand and equally the people who signed off the building would have done so based on there being a lift in the building, regardless of its design'.

A positive by-product of the project partnership is that Linkage students now also have access to an allotment. This was provided by the council because there is not enough space for one on the college site. This means that Linkage staff take students through the park and to their allotment, and students gain further social skills in the wider community.

Engaging with teenagers, especially those who live in the deprived neighbourhoods immediately surrounding the park, has been a challenge in the restoration project. The restoration project was focused on the heritage of the park and reconnecting with the local community broadly. As such did not connect directly with young people. One volunteer describes how *'teenagers are the hardest group to connect with in parks...'*. The Lake project partners are conscious of this, addressing it by targeting teenagers as one of their priority audiences.

5. Engaging with nature and the environment

When asked how their connection to nature has been affected by the recent changes to the park, almost half (45%) of park users surveyed said it had got better. This is a positive sign for the Lake project which explicitly addresses how people connect with nature. *'Younger people...are much more aware about the environment and all the problems that we are about to face'*, said one volunteer. *'They are much more aware than the older generations are about the reality of it.'* Another volunteer describes how the focus in the Lake project on biodiversity has real resonance with local teenagers that the Volunteer Coordinator and BPAG already work with: *'...[yes] we get the scouts but...we need to run days that involve some sort of sport, hacking down [vegetation] and conservation stuff'*.

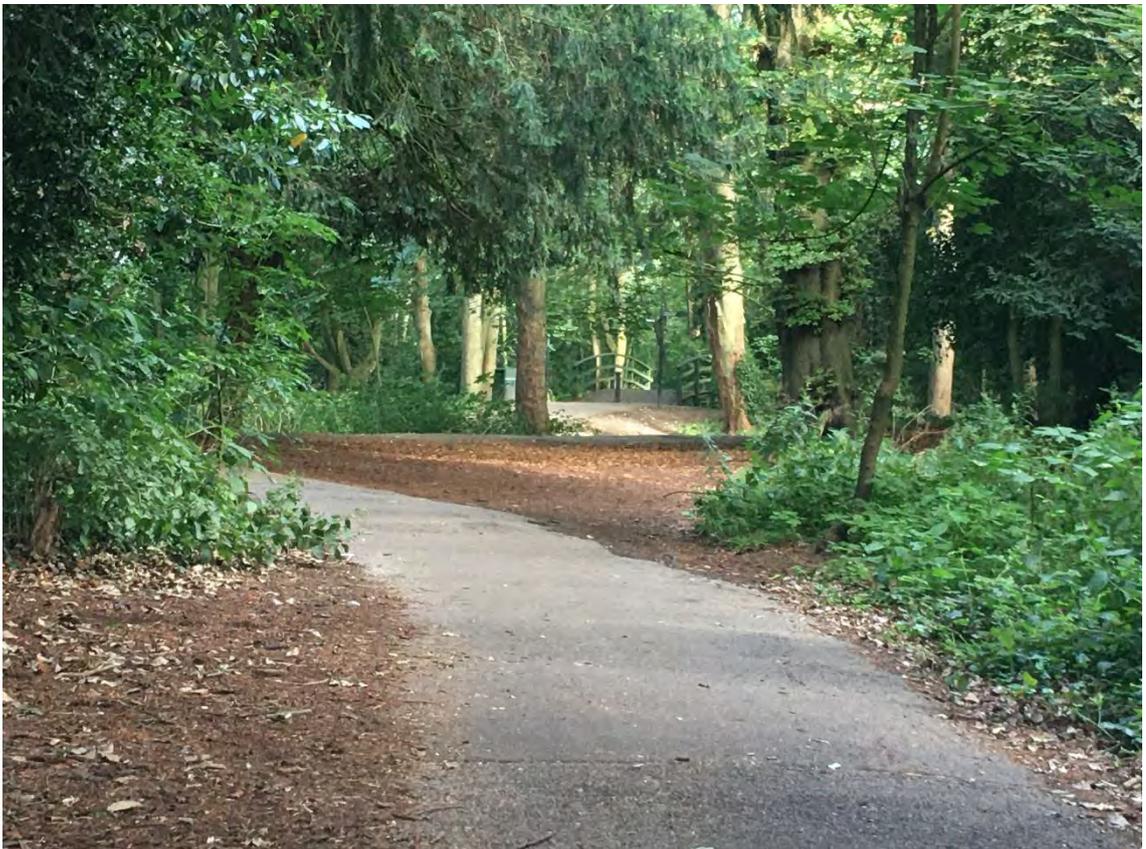
Teenagers, as well as non-speaking residents, children, older people, Linkage students and potential volunteers are the Lake project's target groups. The partnership with the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust (LWT) aims to *'really engage with these groups in terms of learning about the biodiversity and raise awareness of how important our lake is for biodiversity'* as one volunteer puts it.

Part of this engagement will be clearly communicating why certain decisions are made. For example, tree removals are an inevitable part of any project involving mature trees. The Lake partners recently co-hosted a drop-in session about the tree works, meaning that LWT were on hand to answer any questions locals had about the process and talk through the wider wildlife benefits of removing some lakeside trees to enable greater light penetration and less leaf litter falling into the lake, to improve water quality and use by wildlife within the water.

In a park like Boutham with its combination of formal and informal parts, engaging with nature takes a variety of forms. Historically, the Ellison family planted the ornamental woodland in the mid 19th century, including black poplar. Around the lake, the planted trees are mainly oak, lime and beech. In the more formal part of the park, yew trees were planted in an avenue and remain around the fountain.



Boultham Park Lake, 2020. Photo: Nicola Dempsey.



Boultham Park Woodland, 2020. Photo: Nicola Dempsey.



Sundial and bandstand in the distance, 2020. Photo: Nicola Dempsey.

When the park was later owned by the council, there were large greenhouses in which the council grew many of their bedding plants for sites around the city. By the mid-1990s, these were derelict. The restoration project included the construction of new glasshouses on a smaller scale, which now provide a mini-garden centre where plants are grown as part of the training for Linkage students. This provides the students with valuable opportunities to engage with *'the horticulture, green open space and nature on our doorstep in the park'*, according to the Linkage project partner. A volunteer reiterated this: *'this is their back garden – it's a great classroom for them'*.

This sentiment is shared by the 80 or so people who come for bat evenings in the summer, hosted by the Lincolnshire district bat society starting at St Helen's Church and then a bat-spotting walk around the park. For younger park users, toddlers and parents engage in 'mini nature explorer' activities which were started by the Activities Project Officer and have since continued by a volunteer. The mini nature explorer activities allow toddlers and parents to explore the ecology, helping the children appreciate what's around them.

The birds on the lake have always been a focal point of the park and the aeration of the lake will bring more wildlife in and the birdwatchers with it. Similarly, fish stocks will improve as the water improves. The plan to include information boards on species, and explanations of why things are kept the way they are, will be a big help to get this information over to people more widely.

Volunteers are also instrumental in one of the less talked about activities going on in the Park. The wildflower meadow was started over a year ago. This has been a big project which the Volunteer Coordinator has been overseeing with a number of volunteers. This is alongside ongoing grounds maintenance work including tidying path edges to improve access around the Lake and painting the bowls club pavilion.

There was a need for an outflow from the river and rather than opting for a bland concrete construction, one volunteer – the late John Pye – was able to install a tilting weir overflow using reclaimed bricks. Doing this in his own time with donated materials, this 'gully' as John called it, is in keeping with the park's historic character. It complements the Beacon which was also made by John in his back garden, further demonstrating the strong relationship that volunteers have with the park.



The Beacon at the Lake during renovation works. Photo: Boutham Park Digital Archive.

6. Reducing inequalities

Some of the residents near Boultham Park live in the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country in terms of income deprivation (Boultham Moor). Delving a little deeper into the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, the scores of the neighbourhoods for health and income deprivation have not changed significantly between 2015 and 2019. However, when we examine the 'living environment domain' which measures the quality of the local environment, we can see improvements between 2015 and 2019 for every neighbourhood around the park. This is interesting, but we would not like to directly attribute these improvements in scores to the restoration project, particularly when we look at the tendency for improvements across the city of Lincoln as a whole.

The Parks for People project has certainly meant the restoration of a safe, accessible and welcoming park for these residents, as well as the new Linkage residents who have benefited from the park on their doorstep. The Linkage students with learning disabilities have a living and learning environment which provides integration into the community. This is one of the reasons Linkage selected this development sites, to ensure that there were good physical and social connections to the local community.

A further point to be mentioned about reducing inequalities is around the events and activities in the park. Boultham Park's events are widely publicised and are all free at the point of entry. The day of the park re-opening coincided with weekend of the FA Cup final and royal wedding. There was a royal wedding celebration held at Lincoln Castle. According to the Linkage partner, *'people in this community wouldn't ever have gone to the Castle. That would have been seen as far too middle class. Actually, this [event in Boultham Park] was...very local...very accessible'*.

7. Supporting the local economy

The partnership with Linkage as a learning disability charity is fundamental in how Boultham Park supports the local economy. Linkage's status as a charity means that they are able to access funding that are not available to a local authority, indicating that income generating activities such as the park can be subsidised, where possible, by other grant funding.

The café and the Education centre have created seventeen jobs at the park through Linkage which brings direct benefits to the students. This is also a significant contribution to the local economy which one would not normally associate with a park. The nature of the unique partnership between the Council and Linkage as a charity indicates strong potential for long-term and sustainable management of the facilities in the park.

The Linkage-run café continues to be popular with locals and Saturday parkrunners from the wider Lincoln area. There is scope for more income from the café, which is already being explored with the potential new awning which would facilitate more outdoor custom. The durable and robust outdoor seating and the serving hatch, together with the provision of shelter from the rain, could permit a potentially wider offering for customers. This could also permit more footfall during free events such as the annual summer fair.

The Education Centre has rooms to hire which means a range of events can happen and be catered by the Boultham Park café. The glasshouse sells plants, in a non-profit making capacity. The income from the plants goes to Linkage to cover the costs of new plantings.

The annual summer fair provides opportunities for local businesses to set up stalls and related activities. For example, the 2019 summer fair had stalls ranging from local artists selling greeting cards, a cheese toastie van to a gymnasium setting up a boxing ring for martial arts training sessions. A small amount of income from the summer fair (generated from stall holders) goes to the council to cover maintenance and management costs.

The focus in Boultham Park is on community-oriented events and activities which are free at the point of entry therefore do not generate significant income. For example, activities such as 'Music with Mummy: family-friendly sessions during the summer holidays', footballing sessions and wreath-making at Christmas only charge enough to cover the event costs. Therefore a lot of the value in what happens in the park is down to the volunteer hours. BPAG do raise funds to ensure that the activities are free at the point of entry.

Parkrun is an interesting addition to parks such as Boultham as they clearly bring significant footfall – of up to 500 runners on a weekly basis – to the park. This is a welcome and popular activity which brings economic benefits to the park – the café opens an hour earlier than normal for the extra trade that parkrun brings. However, there is increased wear and tear and some of the bridges and paths may need more maintenance than anticipated – and with it extra costs. This is an issue faced by all parks who host a parkrun and in the case of Boultham Park, there is a good working relationship between the organisations. Parkrun's popularity has led to the introduction of another parkrun nearby, which might ease the numbers in Boultham.

While the employment that Linkage provides is very important, it is not the only capacity building that happens in the park. As mentioned earlier, there are some local people whose choice to volunteer has provided them the experience that helps them go into paid employment.

There are other potential opportunities that have not yet been realised which might lead to income generation. For example, given that the Parks for People project has helped increase user numbers in the park, proposals could go to Sport England in relation to improving the football field. While it does inevitably mean a piecemeal approach has to be taken to funding which can be convoluted and time-consuming, it may generate further facility improvements in the park.

There is a proposal being developed for the Council to collect revenue from any commercial events held in the park that make a profit. The plan is that such revenue would be ring-fenced for Boutham and any surplus is absorbed into the Council's parks budget, however to date this has not been adopted.

8. Challenges and opportunities

There are challenges in every park, and Boutham is no exception. These include effective day to day care and maintenance, including dealing with anti-social behaviour; integrating volunteers with professional staff; sustaining active community involvement; managing competing interests between different users of the park; and protecting and increasing biodiversity. As Boutham is still receiving funding for the Lake project for three more years, the challenges for Boutham Park may not be immediately apparent. However, a number of specific challenges have emerged from the restoration project and that relate to the broad issues highlighted above:

- **Sustaining activities in the park** is a point of interest for all project partners, but one taken on most directly by the BPAG volunteers. This is described by one of the volunteers as needing to 'manage an exit strategy so BPAG can start being self-sufficient' as there are aspirations to continue some of the very successful activities that Parks for People funded. This is challenging because such resources for funded events and activities will not be consistently available in the future. There is no talk of large-scale income generation at the park which, given Boutham's local nature, is entirely appropriate. Having the Linkage-run café and toilets can help with attracting people to the park, as can the expertise and skills in BPAG that have led to a recently very successful annual summer fair. This might mean that a small number of events run in the future could be at a similar size and scale to those organised by the Activities Project Manager funded by Parks for People.
- **Working relationships in the partnership** have been crucial to the success of the restoration project. These have not always been positive and have been subject to significant change over time, not least with the change in personnel in Linkage and BPAG. One of the perennial issues facing partnerships which secure funding is that the paid staff often leave the project before the project ends. As one Council project partner puts it: 'your staff tend to come and go as they are fixed term contract staff, and that's always a challenge unless you've got a bank of project management staff in your organisation which we don't'. The partnership also had challenges from within the community, where harnessing local support was not always achieved successfully through BPAG. When irreconcilable differences of opinions began to threaten the relationship between BPAG and the project when the Lake project had to be separated, a different approach was taken by the new BPAG Chair: 'we changed the style and the dynamic. We became much more engaged with the council'. This was based on BPAG providing the advice, rather than long-standing resistance, that is explicit in its constitution and name.
- The **design, location and ongoing use of the buildings** have provided many benefits for the park. Having new neighbours flanking the western side of the park is invaluable and having the café so close to the Linkage Education centre is useful for the staff and students moving between the two. However, it is not located close to public parking which means that other less mobile users, wanting to access the café by car, cannot do this easily. In addition, where public parking might be available – at the Linkage Education centre - the changing lifestyle choices of students with learning disabilities means a large number of cars are always parked on-site and no extra parking is available. There is also an ongoing challenge of the location of the 'Changing Places' toilet facility inside the Education Centre rather than at the café. In hindsight, this was a mistake and day-to-day means that someone at the café must have a key to open the Education Centre outside the Centre's opening hours whenever anyone wants to use it.
- Linkage is playing a key role in the park **helping users better understand disability**. The ongoing presence of students at the Education Centre, doing work

experience in the café or planting in the glasshouse, means that park users are engaging with people with learning disabilities, which was not happening before the restoration project.

- The Activities Project officer was employed by Linkage, rather than the Council, which was crucial in **ensuring that events were as inclusive and accessible** as possible for all park users, especially people with learning disabilities. This was based on a recognition that Boutham Park needed to offer a range of different events as some may inevitably not be 'everyone's cup of tea'.

9. Learning points

1. **The restoration project has turned the Park into a destination again, giving people more reason to come and spend time here.** The café, the glasshouse and the Education Centre provide an active hub in the park, which was not there before. People can now spend longer at the park because of the café and accessible toilet facilities, and may be attracted by the range of small to large-scale events that happen throughout the year. The Lake project will bring more reasons for people to come to the park with occasional boating and biodiversity-focused events and activities with particular focus on teenagers.
2. **Partners holding true to the shared vision is crucial.** Even though each partner has very different goals and outcomes, they are linked and aligned to the same vision. The shared vision of making the community better for everyone in Boutham Park meant that the partnership between Linkage and the Council went beyond the financial arrangement – the Linkage project partner calls it ‘a true partnership’.
3. **Allowing for flexibility in how the project develops is important.** For Boutham Park, the Lake is a very important part of its heritage, and connects a lot of people to the park. The only way to include the Lake in the park’s restoration was to acknowledge the high costs and apply for another grant, which required adaptability on the part of everyone involved.
4. **It is also important to have flexibility for the day-to-day activities in the park.** This was described as ‘wobble room’, which allows for a pragmatic approach to do things a little differently if original outcomes are still being achieved. This is also important when things change over time: for Linkage, government-led education requirements had changed over the life of the project meaning that some things which were promised in the bid simply cannot be achieved.
5. While there is often high staff turnover in short-term projects, **having someone who is a constant in the project is very useful.** They have the ‘project memory’ but it also means that there is some continuity. This is not always possible and there are real challenges for partners when projects invariably end without a Project/ Activities Manager in post for the last few months. This can lead to a case of someone ‘stepping in to cover’ for which they may not have the requisite skills.
6. **An ongoing understanding of disability in the park** is a positive by-product of the partnership. Opportunities in the park, such as working in the café or conducting user surveys, can provide Linkage students with valuable skills for living independently in the community. Providing choice in the type of events that go on in the park can help bring people together around a variety of interests which don’t all have to be large-scale events.
7. **Taking time to learn lessons and apply them is invaluable.** The partnership have been able to reflect on the restoration project and apply their learning from this to the Lake project. For example, the engagement of teenagers which was not fully achieved is now a principal aim of the Lake project. The relationship with BPAG strengthened throughout the restoration project leading to volunteers playing key roles in the Lake project which focus on engaging the community from the outset.

8. **Knowledge and resources have been shared across parks in the city.** Making time to keep talking to other parks groups means that there is wider learning to be shared from the project. The successful events and activities in Boutham Park led to partnership working on events organisation between BPAG members and the Advisory Group at the Arboretum to help with an event similar to the summer fair. This sharing has also extended to Advisory Group members from other parks attending BPAG meetings.
9. **Capacity building is an important building block for the sustainability of the project and its life beyond.** Alongside the skills that Linkage students are developing through engagement in the park, there are volunteers who have gained training and work experience that are helping them overcome mental health problems, combatting loneliness and finding employment. While volunteers cannot, and should not, replace paid, skilled staff, Boutham Park has a large number of highly dedicated volunteers who want to give up their time. The professional skills that volunteers bring to the park have also been successfully harnessed for these projects. It is not clear at present what the volunteers will do once the Lake Project is completed marking the end of the capital funding.
10. **Having an Advisory Group with its representative voting process** which is based on one interest group = one vote is an innovative and effective way of making sure that no-one interest group 'bombs a vote with a particular position'. Different categories – from fishing syndicates, bird watchers, dog walkers, rambblers, schools, faith organisations, the police – are all represented (excluding Councillors or Council representatives).
11. **'You might as well front it and give people the respect to tell them what you're doing and why you're doing it.'** Clashes between the community and the project team were often around a lack of understanding of how funding programmes work. The Boutham Park project team have been able to deal with this by facilitating an open dialogue with the community and with those BPAG members who supported the overall project vision. However, a lot of the success has been down to having supportive partners in place who sign up to the overarching project vision. The fact that BPAG is a more active partner in the Lake project than they were in the restoration project is testament to a transparent and open approach to partnership working.
12. **A strategic vision at city level is important.** This has underpinned the successes at Boutham Park, But more importantly, it's one that Council members fully support – with or without funding behind it. This belief that parks improvements can make positive differences to entire areas in a city was shared by decision-makers in the Council, meaning that when funding opportunities came about, signing off projects had full political support.

10. Conclusion: The difference Parks for People has made

The improvements in the park are clear for all to see: the new café and glasshouse alongside the Education centre all contribute to a hub in the south of the park. The renovation of the bandstand means that it is once again the setting for music events. The sundial, fountain and new outline of the old hall's footprint breathe life back into the park's unique history. Path and bridge improvements as well as changes to the entrances have made getting into and around the park easier. This will all be enhanced by the forthcoming changes to the Lake and environs, particularly the improvements in water quality, art installations, increased seating and new viewing platform, pontoon and fishing pegs.

The anti-social behaviour that once blighted the park has reduced significantly in the park as a result of CCTV, improved lighting and sightlines through the trees, as well as the more permanent presence of users in the park. The quality of the park has improved so much that it was awarded a Green Flag, joining the other large parks in Lincoln. There is a sense of shared pride in the park expressed by the users – of the part it plays in their everyday lives when they come to walk their dogs, play with their children, walk or run for their health or take part in the organised events.

The café is the new heart of the park and provides shelter and accessible toilet facilities that were not there before. Having Linkage's Education Centre means there is activity going on in the park all year round. Linkage's positive presence at the park brings increased interactions between park users, local residents and young people with learning difficulties which was simply not happening before. As the volunteers stated: "Now Linkage is a part of the park. And it has brought an air of positivity about the park. It just brightens your day. And it's a younger dynamic in the park. There's a lot of older people in the park and the younger dynamic Linkage brings is great".

The volunteers contribute greatly to Boultham Park, and there is a strong commitment to the place. This is recognised by the Council:

'one of the unexpected outcomes is the community ownership...I've been surprised by the extent of the community ownership with this project. There's something there and I wish I knew what it was because we should bottle it up if we can...'

Supporting those volunteers to do what they are good at and enjoy is something that BPAG takes seriously. This building up of skills, confidence and positive affect on mental health has been greatly supported in the Parks for People project. Providing the equipment, cups of tea and structure of volunteering activities is not a trivial matter and can massively affect volunteer take-up. The commitment to Boultham Park and the real partnership that is at play here is demonstrated in different ways. From BPAG members winning the City of Lincoln annual Mayoral Medals to the Council's Volunteering Coordinator collecting a volunteer suffering from dementia who wants to continue volunteering but can no longer drive. This commitment has also extended beyond Boultham Park where volunteers are sharing knowledge, skills and resources with the Advisory Groups of the other parks in Lincoln, which in turn will potentially bring benefits to residents across the city and beyond.

It's clear that the hub facilities in the park – with a café that can be sustained by a charitable organisation – would not have happened without Parks for People funding. The innovative partnership and its commitment to the shared vision for making the community better for everyone has thrived in Boultham Park. It has also taken unexpected turns. It has overcome problems including the Lake Project which almost

did not happen, community clashes and disruptive staff turnover. The restoration project has marked a sea-change in how Council approaches its parks. It's the 'power of partnership' as one Council project member puts it: "...the benefits at the beginning of this project with Linkage [brought] different things to the table. We will never embark on another project without exploring all possible partnerships first'. This all bodes well for the long-term future of Boultham Park.

Appendix 1: methodology

Research for this case study took place in winter 2020. After reviewing the documents related to the project, the researcher visited Boultham Park in January 2020 to see the work done, conduct interviews with the project partners and other stakeholders. She then returned to the park in the spring to interview park users. There were two group and other individual interviews with the following seven people:

- Representative from Linkage
- Volunteer Coordinator at Lincoln City Council
- Restoration Project manager and member of Community Services team at Lincoln City Council
- Member of Senior management in Communities and Street Scene, Lincoln City Council
- Boultham Park Advisory Group member
- Active local volunteer involved in the Lake Project
- Local volunteer involved in BPAG-led events in the park

There were also nine face-to-face individual interviews with park users. The individuals interviewed are not a representative sample of the population, but are knowledgeable about the project and the local area and in many cases have been involved in community activities connected to the project. There was an online survey which was circulated to the community via the Boultham Park website. This was completed by 44 park users.

Appendix 2: About the area

Local Health

	Boultham Ward	Lincoln	England
Limiting long term illness or disability, 2011	13.4%	18.5%	17.6%
Households that experience fuel poverty, 2016	13.3%	13.3%	11.1%
People aged 65 and over living alone, 2011	35.5%	35.9%	31.5%
Life expectancy			
At birth for males, 2013-2017 (years)	80.2	77.6	79.5
At birth for females, 2013-2017 (years)	83.7	81.5	83.1

Source: ONS and Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

Index of Multiple Deprivation

	2010		2015		2019	
	IMD Rank	IMD Decile	IMD Rank	IMD Decile	IMD Rank	IMD Decile
Lincoln 008B	14,720	5	16,494	6	19,628	6

Source: English Indices of Deprivation, MHCLG. Note: Data is included at LSOA level (Lower Layer Super Output Area).

Economic Activity

Economic activity rate – aged 16-64	Lincoln	England
2005	75.6%	76.6%
2010	81.3%	76.3%
2015	79.1%	77.9%
2019	80.0%	79.2%

Source: Annual Population Survey, ONS. Note: Data is included UK parliamentary constituency level (Lincoln).

Housing Market

Average price paid	2010		2015		2019	
	LN6 7 & LN5 8 postcode (average)	Lincolnshire	LN6 7 & LN5 8 postcode (average)	Lincolnshire	LN6 7 & LN5 8 postcode (average)	Lincolnshire
Detached	£147,559	£197,569	£172,214	£220,124	£219,414	£263,256
Semi-detached	£115,456	£125,357	£143,336	£142,617	£165,856	£172,491
Terraced	£92,813	£112,565	£107,150	£127,990	£129,976	£142,200
Flat/maisonette	£64,555	£93,008	£80,738	£107,298	£128,897	£122,768
Overall average	£108,628	£157,313	£127,536	£175,818	£157,686	£208,031

Source: HM Land Registry.