

Levensgrove Park award brings HLF investment in Scottish parks to over £50million

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Levensgrove Park

The Dumbarton park has been given initial support for a grant of £2.66million to restore the historic character of this popular public place, upgrade its amenities, extend its vital social work activity, and through events and activities encourage more people through its gates. The award was made through HLF's Parks for People programme.

This new funding follows the publication of the HLF's recent report, the State of UK Public Parks 2014: Renaissance to Risk? (26 June) which revealed the UK's public parks are at serious risk of decline unless innovative new ways of funding and maintaining them are found.

Stretching down to the banks of the Clyde estuary and with views to Dumbarton Rock, Levensgrove Park was formally opened in 1885. Originally part of the larger Levensgrove House estate, its historic features include a medieval parish church, St Serf's, with links to King Robert the Bruce, and an historic well possibly also dating to the medieval period. Although the best example of a Victorian park in the region, investment is needed to save its unique heritage which is at serious risk of loss.

As part of the project St Serf's Church and the historic well will be conserved, the ornamental fountain will be brought back into working order and the war memorial will be repaired. New play, sports and cafe facilities will be installed and the original park entrances restored.

The introduction of five new posts including two Park Wardens and a Community Engagement Officer will help develop new activities and events to encourage more people to use the park and the heritage in it. To ensure that people with disabilities have full access to activities in and around the park there will be a specially designed play area, art and craft spaces and a sensory room leading to a sensory garden.

Commenting, Colin McLean, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland, said: "Levensgrove Park is a place of sanctuary for many so we are delighted to be able to support its transformation into a pleasant leafy green space for even more of the community to enjoy. We are particularly pleased as West Dunbartonshire is a priority area for HLF and we have been working with lots of local groups to make sure that they make the most of the Heritage Lottery grants available to them. I hope that today's news will not only encourage many more people through the gates of Levensgrove Park but will also encourage other projects to come forward to benefit from Heritage Lottery investment."

Councillor Patrick McGlinchey, Convener of Infrastructure and Regeneration, said: "This is fantastic news for our area. I'm delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has recognised the significance of this park which is one of the oldest and most beautiful in our area.

"This funding will allow us to restore many of the Victorian features including the fountain, create a new pavilion and cafe and install new play equipment. We are making the park more accessible and are developing facilities, including a play area, specifically for our disabled residents. The work we have planned will enhance Levensgrove and attract more visitors to this stunning setting."

Levensgrove Park is the third park in West Dunbartonshire to benefit from HLF investment: Balloch Castle Country Park received a grant of £1.6million while Dalmeir Park in Clydbank is currently undergoing a transformation thanks to funding of £860,000 from HLF.

Notes to Editors

A first-round pass means the project meets our criteria for funding and we believe it has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award. On occasion, an applicant with a first round pass will also be awarded development funding towards the development of their scheme.

- This announcement can be followed on Twitter [#parksmatter](#)
- State of UK Public Parks 2014: Renaissance to risk?
- To establish a national picture of the state of UK parks HLF commissioned three new UK-wide surveys: a survey of local authority park managers, a survey of park friends and user groups, and a public opinion survey undertaken by Ipsos MORI. The research has also drawn

on other pre-existing data to assess how the condition of parks has changed over time, and to cross-check our results. Details of the report findings can be found at [State of UK Public Parks](#)

- The Parks for People programme uses Lottery funds to support the regeneration, conservation and increased enjoyment of public parks and cemeteries. In England the two Lottery Funds have been working in partnership from 2006 to deliver a multi-million pound investment in public parks of £150m. Find out more about how to apply at our [Parks for People programme page](#).

Further information

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For Levensgrove Park, please contact Amanda Graham, West Dunbartonshire Council, on 01389 737225; email: amanda.graham@west-dunbarton.gov.uk