

Lottery fund boost for Hunstanton Heritage Gardens

29/06/2015



Bandstand in typical british weather Brendan Kelly

Under the Parks for People programme, the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, submitted a bid for almost £685,400 from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund.

Today's announcement marks an 'in-principle' agreement to grant this funding as long as second round proposals are properly developed in accordance with the original proposal and that progress is satisfactory. The announcement means an initial £28,800 of the overall grant will be released to enable to second round project proposal to be developed. The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk is contributing a further £7,200 towards this project development phase.

Cllr Alistair Beales, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Industrial Assets, said: "This is excellent news. Officers worked hard with local people in Hunstanton to put together this bid and it's very gratifying to see that the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund have recognised the vital importance of The Green, the Esplanade Gardens and Cliff Parade within Hunstanton. The main aims of the project will be to celebrate and respect the vision of the seaside park's original founder – Henry Styleman Le Strange and to ensure the people have the training and skills to maintain the parks into the future, allowing them to evolve and yet leave a lasting legacy."

The bid was developed in conjunction with Hunstanton Regeneration Project Team. The Green, Esplanade Gardens and Cliff Parade cover an area of approximately 6.8 hectares - a significant green space within Hunstanton which is used by residents and visitors alike. This area features 'butterfly' shelters, a bandstand and other heritage assets including the Victorian Pavilion, town cross, town sign, fountains and St Edmund's Chapel.

The detailed project proposal for the second round will need to show how these assets will be fully refurbished and how wider benefits will be brought to the area. One of the keys will be getting more volunteers involved.

Cllr Beales added: "The community gets involved in a lot of activities in Hunstanton. We hope that as part of this second round bid we will be able to build upon that foundation so that we can ensure that more use is made of these beautiful spaces and that there is better interpretation of the history behind them. It's a really exciting opportunity for people to do something for their town and gain some new skills along the way."

The second-round bid needs to be submitted in March 2016 for a decision in June 2016. The anticipated project costs would be covered by a grant of £656,600 from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund plus £164,145 from the borough council.

The mains elements of the bid include:

- replacement of the shelters
- replacement of play area
- improvements to the crazy golf
- improvements to the hard landscape (including footpaths)
- replacement of street furniture
- development of a town guide service
- introduction of horticultural apprenticeships
- event management training
- development of a digital archive and a smart phone app to help people learn about Hunstanton and how it has developed

HLF's Chair Sir Peter Luff, said, on behalf of HLF and the Big Lottery Fund: "We all benefit from spending time outside in the fresh air, so it's vital that we look after our green spaces, particularly in dense urban areas. National Lottery players' money will give a boost to Hunstanton Gardens, helping make sure they have a great future."

The Hunstanton Regeneration Project Team included representatives from Hunstanton Town Council, Hunstanton Chamber of Trade, the borough council and others.

Further information

Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk Sharon Clifton, Communications Manager, on 01553 616711.

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