



4h December 2014

Our Ref: PPL

Please ask for: Martin Whitchurch
Direct Dial: 01202 261323
Email: m.whitchurch@poole.gov.uk

Your Ref:

Dear Resident and Poole Park user

Open Letter Re: Poole Park Life Heritage Lottery Fund bid

In August 2014 Borough of Poole submitted a funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) *Parks for People* programme. The bid took a year to put together and included extensive public engagement in early 2014, with over 1,100 questionnaires being returned and over 2,500 people engaged with at various events.

Following this engagement a series of master plans were created and publicised on our project website (www.pooleprojects.net), in the park on project banners and at special return engagement events.

The bid to the HLF is a two-round process, we have submitted our round one bid and we will be given an answer on the 17th December. If successful, we then enter the 2-year development phase of the bid and submit our round 2 bid in early 2017. This will then lead to the delivery phase where we would receive the main grant, in the region of £2.5m and actually spend capital funds.

For our round one bid the HLF required cost estimates for the work that is likely to take place. These are only estimates because little design work has taken place, conservation plans have not been written and tenders have not been let.

We included in the master plans items that we consulted on and would like to progress. However, a big factor in the project is the main boating lake and how we improve our management and maintenance of it to reduce the incidences of algal blooms, tassel weed, swarms of midges and generally improve its value for both people and wildlife.

If successful with the bid we will undertake a year-long research and monitoring programme in the development phase, starting in January 2015. This should fill in our knowledge and evidence gaps on what happens with this tidal lagoon, what comes in through the many pipes in to the lake, how deep it is, how much wildlife is in there and what happens when the sluice gate is opened and we exchange water with the harbour.



We will also be undertaking similar, but lower scale research on the two smaller freshwater ponds.

For the bid we had to include some costings to come up with an overall total, therefore we had to have a proposed list of works. After discussing ideas with external consultants and colleagues across the Council, we included proposals to dredge the lake to make it deeper, create new reed beds along the lake walls which will both add biodiversity value and reinforce the walls. Other ideas were boardwalks over the water and investigating the impact of surface water pipes and the use of reed beds or ponds to diffuse the pollution before it reaches the main lake. One suitable location for this idea is through Copse Close.

All of these ideas were in the master plans and made public as indicated above. Similarly all of the ideas we have entered in to the bid will be consulted upon fully if we are successful once we have more detail. The lake-related ideas will be clarified once we have the research report back in spring 2016, and only then will we be ready to fully consider any of the ideas.

There has been a lot of recent interest and worry over the proposal to dig out the surface water pipe that runs under Copse Close and turn it into what is being referred to as a 'bog garden'. This is one of the ideas alluded to above and is in no means a definite.

The reason for suggesting it is that we believe a significant amount of pollutants run through the surface water pipe and straight in to the lake. This is because the water in it drains from the roads and driveways all the way from Sea View roundabout, the hospital and almost to Ashley Cross. By opening up the pipe and having ponds, a stream and possibly some reed beds, then the pollution could be diffused before it enters the lake.

There are clearly issues over maintenance of the ponds and streams, whether they could they attract midges and how much room would they take up. All of these questions need answering and will be once the research project is complete in 2016. If the evidence tells us it is not worth doing we won't do it. If it tells us it would make a vital difference to the lake, then we will engage with local residents, draw up some better ideas on the how, where and why and discuss these fully with you. Only then would we take a balanced view on whether to proceed or not.

The HLF will not give us any funding if we do not include the public in our bid. The works of volunteers and the Friends of Poole Park in particular has already been immense and we hope, actually *have*, to engage and interact much more with local communities and park users as the bid progresses.

This open letter is being sent out to all homes that back on to Poole Park in Twemlow Avenue and Copse Close. In addition it will be posted on our project website, Facebook page and hard copy in the park banners and has been sent to your ward Councillors.

I hope this helps to explain the process we went through in submitting the bid, our reasons for including the ideas presented in the master plans and our fundamental desire and need to consult and engage with park users and residents effectively.

A lot of people have already supported our work in submitting the bid, raising funds and running events and I hope that you can help to support this project and realise the

potential improvements we can make to Poole Park, which as we are regularly told is the 'People's park'.

Links to further information are presented below if you would like to find out more.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Whitchurch', is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Martin Whitchurch
Project Leader.
Borough of Poole.

Websites:

<http://www.pooleprojects.net/poole-park-life.html>

<http://www.poole.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/parks-and-open-spaces/poole-park/>

<http://www.hlf.org.uk/looking-funding/our-grant-programmes/parks-people>

<http://www.friendsofpoolepark.btck.co.uk/>

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/PooleProjects

Search for *Poole Park Users Group*