

PARKS REBORN

A Record of The Heritage Lottery Fund's Urban Parks Programme

By The Parks Agency, October 2002

Introduction to this report

In January 2002, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) commissioned consultants SQW to conduct an evaluation of the Fund's Urban Parks Programme (UPP) 1997-2002 and the impact the programme has had in bringing heritage benefits to the UK's legacy of historic urban parks and the public benefits to the communities who use them. In support of this evaluation exercise, HLF has commissioned the Parks Agency to produce a separate, but complementary, narrative record of the UPP's inception and development.

This report therefore records the context in which the UPP was established and examines the processes and policies which underpinned the Programme's evaluation. It also evaluates and records the impact of the Programme in influencing and forming national and local opinion on the value of historic public parks and other urban open spaces and the way they should be maintained and managed.

The research has been conducted through the following means:

- Examination of HLF documents including policy and casework papers to the HLF Trustees; the Small Grants Committee; Regional Committees and the Parks Advisory Panel (PAP)
- Interviews with key individuals selected from HLF Trustees, senior staff and advisers
- Study of published articles and press cuttings
- Personal recollection of the Parks Agency Staff. David Lambert was a member of the Parks Advisory Panel, set up in 1995 to advise the HLF on guidelines for the Programme, and has continued as a member of the HLF's Historic Buildings and Land Expert Advisory Panel to advise on the development of policy and on individual cases. Stewart Harding was seconded to the HLF from the Countryside Commission in April 1996 to establish and manage the parks grant scheme. Since then he has continued to be involved in park restoration projects as a monitor and in providing expert advice.
- Tracking of the wider political context and the emerging policies and strategies of other organisations.

The report is presented in two sections. Section 1 details the inception, development and evolution of the UPP internally to the HLF; Section 2 examines the influence of the UPP on raising awareness and the development of policies and opinion in other agencies. The report also includes a bibliography of published sources, a list of unpublished documents and a chronology of key events.

SECTION 1: HLF INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE URBAN PARKS PROGRAMME

1.0 Background to the Urban Parks Programme

1.1 Parks and open spaces - national strategic context

Public parks and open spaces have been, for decades, the Cinderellas of national strategic planning for leisure and recreation. They have not benefited from the promotional activities, support, regulation and guidance from national or regional bodies as have other areas of leisure and cultural heritage provision such as sports, museums, libraries, play and architecture.

At departmental level, responsibility for parks fell between the remits of the Department of National Heritage (DNH), now the DCMS, and the old Department of the Environment (DOE). Responsibility also fell between the remits of the principal statutory agencies which might have had a legitimate interest: in promoting public parks: English Heritage; English Nature and the Countryside Commission, now the Countryside Agency. Even when, during the late 1980s, there was an upsurge of interest in the protection and restoration of historic parks and gardens, *public* parks and open spaces attracted little attention.

The following sections briefly trace the decline of public parks and record the context into which the Urban Parks Programme was announced.

1.2 The decline of public parks

The number and quality of the UK's public parks were, for more than a hundred years, an international symbol of horticultural excellence and enlightened social policy. Since their inception in the Public Health Movement during the second half of the 19th Century they have proved to be both eminently adaptable to meeting the recreational needs of successive generations, and enduringly popular and powerful icons of civic pride.

However it is now widely accepted that many urban parks have suffered from decades of neglect and decline and there is clear evidence emerging that the same spiral of decline in standards is affecting country parks.

The reasons for this dramatic fall in standards and the efforts made by a variety of bodies to reverse the decline are described in Harding, S (2000) "Towards a Renaissance in Urban Parks".¹ Since 1990 there has grown an increasingly vociferous lobby from the professional, trade and voluntary sectors which has begun to find a response from the statutory agencies, governmental departments and, finally, from Government itself.

What has been made clear by these commentators is that the barriers to greater public use and enjoyment of parks, gardens and open spaces are concerns over personal safety; standards of

¹ Harding, S (2000) "Towards a Renaissance in Urban Parks". *Cultural Trends* 35, pp 4-20.
London: Policy Studies Institute

cleanliness and maintenance; the ongoing dereliction and loss of public facilities and the decline in standards of horticulture.

1.3 Lobbying for change - publications

In 1993, the Garden History Society and the Victorian Society together produced a report, *Public Prospects: the Historic Urban Park under Threat*.² *Public Prospects* was part of a gathering consensus about the crisis in which nineteenth-century public parks had found themselves by the end of the twentieth century. The Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management (ILAM) had been trying to raise awareness of the need for investment in parks in documents such as its *Guide to Management Plans for Parks and Open Spaces* (1991).³ In *Grounds for Concern* (1993)⁴ the GMB (formerly the General Municipal Boilermakers Union), which represents public sector gardeners, had drawn attention to the loss of horticultural skills and training opportunities, largely as a result of the introduction of compulsory competitive tendering in 1988.

The decade had begun with the publication of Hazel Conway's pioneering *People's Parks: the Design and Development of Victorian Parks in Britain* (1990).⁵ This was the first scholarly treatment of public parks as historic landscapes; addressing not only their artistic content but also their cultural, social and economic context, and it played a critical, if unforeseen, role in establishing public parks as legitimate recipients of heritage grant-aid. The book also paved the way for English Heritage to begin redressing the imbalance against urban parks on the national *Register of parks and gardens of special historic interest*.

By 1994 the worsening situation had become sufficiently acute for the Landscape Institute to issue a *Policy Statement on Urban Parks* calling for an Urban Parks Commission, followed in 1995 by ILAM who made a set of recommendations to central and local government. ILAM *Policy Position Statement No 7 Urban Parks* (August 1995) said:

Many public parks in Britain are perceived as being in decline and failing to make a proper contribution to the quality of urban living.... The major savings from Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) are rarely re-invested in parks and the contracting out of grounds maintenance has accelerated the withdrawal of site based staff in many parks to the dismay of visitors.

ILAM recommended that the DOE should:

place urban parks and green spaces at the centre of their policies for urban renewal and sustainable development.

And local authorities should:

² Conway, H and Lambert, D (1993) *Public Prospects: Historic Urban Parks under Threat*. London: The Garden History Society and the Victorian Society

³ Barber, A (1991) *A Guide to Management Plans for Parks and Open Spaces*. Basildon: Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management

⁴ GMB (Undated, 1993) *Grounds for Concern*. London: GMB & GMB (Undated, 1996) *More Grounds for Concern*. London: GMB

⁵ Conway, H (1991) *People's Parks: The Design and Development of Victorian Parks in Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

- adopt a comprehensive strategy to guide the future planning and management of their public parks and other recreational land
- ensure that standards of customer care, promotion, visitor facilities and the monitoring of visitor satisfaction with urban parks, is equitable with all other leisure provision
- include public parks in new urban regeneration initiatives such as bids for the Single Regeneration Budget
- make urban parks a key part of their policies for equal opportunities, community development and Local Agenda 21 initiatives
- form partnerships with a wide range of private, voluntary and public sector organizations to support public parks
- review opportunities for applications for National Lottery funding of urban park improvement”

In 1995, the independent think tank, Comedia, undertook a research programme on public parks, as part of an ongoing investigation into the condition of the public realm, and published in 1995 *Park Life: Urban Parks and Social Renewal*.⁶ It commissioned twelve working papers from individual experts, and conducted the first ever nationwide research on user numbers and cultural trends. The report came up with some impressive statistics: some 8 million visits a day to parks; 40% of the population regular park-users but, more importantly, it identified good quality public parks as fundamental to urban life. Comedia were then commissioned by the DoE to produce a guide to good practice which came out as *People Parks and Cities* (1996),⁷ consisting of a series of snapshots from local authorities around the country.

1.4 The Heritage Lottery Fund

The Heritage Lottery Fund was set up under the National Lottery Act, 1993, to distribute money provided by the National Lottery to the national heritage. Its powers were widened by the National Heritage Act, 1997, and the Lottery Act, 1998, which required the publication of a strategic plan. The work of the HLF complements that of the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF), which acts as a fund of last resort to defend the most outstanding and important parts of our cultural and natural heritage. The HLF is distributed by the NHMF Board of Trustees. The aim of the HLF is:

To improve the quality of life by safeguarding and enhancing the heritage of buildings, objects and the environment, whether man-made or natural, which have been important in the formation of the character and identity of the United Kingdom, in a way which will encourage more sections of society to appreciate and enjoy their heritage and enable them to hand it on in good heart to future generations.

At the time of HLF's inception, the NHMF was a relatively small organisation, distributing around £9m of grants per annum, and employing a staff of around 15 people. The NHMF was suddenly presented with a massive increase in budget of an expected £350m per year and was under immediate pressure to make grant awards. It responded by growing very quickly to an organisation employing ever increasing numbers of staff: about 150 by 1997 and over 200 today.

⁶ Comedia and Demos (1995) *Park Life: Urban Parks and Social Renewal*. London: Comedia and Demos

⁷ Department of the Environment (1996) *People, Parks and Cities*. London: The Stationery Office

However, HLF did not have the luxury of being able to fully prepare itself for a vastly expanded portfolio: it had to try to make sufficient awards to keep pace with income while simultaneously putting into place the administrative infrastructure that a large organisation needs. The heritage sector as a whole – museums; libraries; collections; historic buildings; military, industrial, transport and maritime heritage – was also ill-prepared to take immediate advantage of the unprecedented amounts of money which had suddenly become available.

One inevitable result of this rapid growth and the unfamiliarity of the scale of opportunity was that policy was often developed in a piecemeal and *ad hoc* fashion through the pressures of process and practice and the determination of applications by Trustees, rather than as specific policy position statements. This was nowhere more so than in the case of urban parks, an aspect of our historic environment which had hitherto not been widely recognised as part of our national heritage. Coupled with the state of decline of parks and the erosion of the organisational structures of park management within local authorities, the Urban Parks Programme was launched into a strategic void, with HLF becoming effectively the lead agent in the field overnight.

These factors, combined with the tight timescale in which the first round of grants was to be announced, combined to increase pressure on the Urban Parks Programme. *Ad hoc* policy making in response to issues raised by applications and their assessment therefore became a necessary and notable feature of the Urban Parks Programme, with informal policy being agreed between the Parks Advisory Panel (PAP) and the Parks Team.

1.5 The Urban Parks Programme

Nineteenth-century urban parks had previously received relatively insignificant sums in grant-aid from English Heritage, in the form of management plans for People's Park, Halifax and Sefton Park in Liverpool, two of the most "historic" of parks. English Heritage and the Countryside Commission (Task Force Trees) had also made grants to a small number of public parks through their storm-damage grant schemes, in the wake of the great storms of 1987 and 1990. The Chairman of the NHMF, Lord Rothschild, and the first chairman of its advisory panel on historic buildings and land, Dame Jennifer Jenkins, together struck upon the idea of grants for urban parks. Lord Rothschild⁸ recalls that:

The Trustees had pretty much a blank canvas when they started and it was their job to identify things to do with heritage and which would have a major impact ... Jennifer Jenkins had strong feelings about public parks having done the Royal Parks Review and liked the idea. We realised that parks offered tremendous scope: they had historic importance and were suffering from degradation.

Dame Jennifer Jenkins⁹ remembered that:

There was cause for concern about the condition of urban parks generally: they were not just run-down but many were approaching dereliction and acting as a focus for the degeneration of a particular area of a town or city.

The first Annual Report, for 1994-95¹⁰ sets out their thinking:

⁸ Telephone interview, September 2002

⁹ Telephone interview, September 2002

Nothing, however, is more important than the restoration of parks, public gardens and open spaces in towns and cities. ... Many parks have now been reduced to a state in which their contribution to the quality of urban life is minimal. Their potential, however, remains enormous. A report published earlier this year [Park Life] revealed that some 40% of the population uses parks regularly, and that many people do so every day. Contributing to the regeneration of urban parks therefore exemplifies our policy in two important respects. It uses lottery money to maximum public benefit, and it converts the legacy of the past into a vital asset for the future.

The Director of the HLF, Anthea Case,¹¹ analysed the appeal of a programme dedicated to urban parks as follows:

There were two drivers. First, HLF put on a brave face but in 1996 it was still reeling from the controversy over its grant to the Churchill papers. In that context, urban parks, as a possibility raised by Lord Rothschild, looked democratic. Secondly, in those early days, Lord Rothschild and the Board of Trustees were conscious of being in a very crowded pool with a number of well-established sharks circling, and wanting the HLF's money. Parks, on the other hand, appeared to be a pool without such sharks. Finally, HLF had been convinced of the state of urban parks, for example by reports such as Park Life (1995).

2.0 The Launch of the Urban Parks Programme and official HLF policy and guidance

2.1 The Parks Advisory Panel

The HLF set up the Parks Advisory Panel in 1995 to establish outline guidance to applicants and to advise HLF on individual grant application cases. Chaired by Professor Ron Brunskill of the School of Built Environment, De Montfort University, the Panel comprised Ms Judy Hillman, urban affairs consultant and writer who served on the Royal Parks Review Group; Dr Hazel Conway, landscape historian and author of *People's Parks*; and Mr David Lambert, Conservation Officer of the Garden History Society and co-author with Hazel Conway of *Public Prospects*. The Panel was expanded during 1996 to include Mr Alan Barber of ILAM and Mr Richard Flenley, of Land Use Consultants, the leading private sector landscape consultancy in the field at the time.

The Parks Advisory Panel composed the initial published guidance to applicants after consultation with “those responsible for the management of parks and gardens”. Particular acknowledgement is given to the authors of *Park Life: Urban Parks and Social Renewal* – Ken Worpole, Liz Greenhalgh and Alan Barber.

2.2 UPP – Published Guidance

The UPP was formally launched by Lord Rothschild in Weston Park, Sheffield, in January 1996 and *The Urban Parks Programme – Additional Guidance Note 1: Urban Parks*¹² was published

¹⁰ Heritage Lottery Fund (1995) *Annual Report 1994-95*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund

¹¹ Telephone interview, September 2002

¹² Heritage Lottery Fund (Undated, 1996) *The Urban Parks Programme*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund

simultaneously. The published guidance outlined the special criteria that HLF would apply in assessing parks projects, but made it clear that the guidance was additional to, and to be read alongside, the full Heritage Lottery Fund Guidelines and Application Pack. The main requirements of all applications to HLF were to apply equally to the UPP, principally (abbreviated):

- Applicants should be eligible – public, charitable or non profit-distributing body
- Private individuals and commercial organisations are not eligible
- Applicant should own the land , or have a lease of 25 (eligible freeholder) or 99 years (ineligible freeholder)
- Project should be a clearly defined capital project, resulting in a significant advance for the heritage asset concerned ... Routine maintenance and repairs are unlikely to be supported
- Normally 25% of partnership funding is expected, but a lower figure may be accepted in areas of particular need. Partnership funding can be contributions in kind, eg materials or voluntary labour, or by an undertaking to support the new or additional running costs of a scheme after it has been completed

The Guidance Note also set out the assessment criteria, based on HLF's general criteria, to be applied in particular to parks projects (abbreviated):

- **Heritage merit:** we will assess the local, regional or national heritage importance of the park ... Park should be at least 30 years old ... other relevant factors include a contribution to a listed building ... Conservation Area ... wider historic townscape scheme. The main purpose of the HLF is to preserve and enhance the “heritage”.
 - **Heritage benefit:** applicants to demonstrate how they will protect and enhance the historic character of the park.
 - **Relevance to local, regional or national strategies:** park projects should be placed within the context of a parks and open spaces strategy for the town as a whole and should demonstrate community support and a relationship to other initiatives – leisure, tourism and nature conservation.
 - **Public benefit:** parks must be fully accessible to the public. Park must continue to be relevant to its modern social setting. Applicants should estimate the number of users and show evidence of local community consultation. Applications should take account of the needs of disabled people.
 - **Technical feasibility:** applications should be supported by a restoration or management plan which includes the conservation, repair and enhancement of the historic landscape ... Proposals should reflect historical authenticity in conservation, repair and restoration of historic buildings, structures and landscape features. New buildings and facilities should be of high quality ...
 - **Organisational strengths:** applicants should demonstrate that they will be able to draw on appropriate levels of technical and project management skills and resources to achieve the capital project and to manage and maintain the park in the longer term. Proposals for involving local people in planning the long-term management of the park should be outlined. Local authority control in itself does not meet this criterion.
-

- **Long-term viability:** proposals should be accompanied by an undertaking that there will be continuing care and maintenance for at least ten years. Consideration may be given to providing assistance where additional specialist staff are required. Proposals for removing or minimising factors which led to the decay of the park should be included.

The Annual Report for 1995-96 laid down the terms in which the UPP was to operate. It referred to the Secretary of State's Directions requiring the HLF to "put forward specific themes to encourage applications from an area of heritage which we believe has a particular claim for support, or indeed to ensure a fairer geographical distribution of Lottery monies." The UPP was "designed to ensure that a significant proportion of Lottery funds is spent on strengthening those communities in urban areas and reviving their historic character."

The political importance of the UPP was thus clear. Lottery spending on heritage was from the start far more keenly and critically watched by the media than agency spending had ever been: witness the media furore over the HLF's grant for the Churchill papers, or the Arts Lottery grant to Covent Garden. There was an expectation and a demand that the "people's money", which the lottery represented far more than tax-revenue, should be spent on delivering tangible public benefit.

The UPP guidelines noted the contribution parks, gardens and open spaces can make in enhancing the quality of life for millions of people in the UK. It recognised that parks "were often created in the past with this in view" but also that many were now suffering from neglect and lack of care. The scope and ambition of the UPP Guidance Note in addressing these issues was breathtakingly broad in several respects:

- The UPP offered "an exciting opportunity to reverse this decline and to make a real difference"
- It covered "parks and open spaces throughout the United Kingdom"
- It wanted to encourage "new ideas and to galvanise thinking"
- It covered "urban parks and gardens" and "other open spaces eg town squares, town moors, seaside promenade gardens, memorial gardens, historic cemeteries"

The Guidance Note, for convenience, used the term "park" to denote all these eligible land types: this report follows suit. The only exceptions to almost universal eligibility were spelled out:

- "Urban parks which are mainly playing fields or sports grounds are unlikely to receive support"
- "We cannot fund the creation of entirely new parks"

Not only were the strategic aims of the UPP impressive, so too were the range of works and costs which could be considered for funding (abbreviated from the Guidance Note):

- Purchase of land
- Landscape improvements including whole park schemes
- Repair of historic structures and buildings, eg fountains, bandstands, glasshouses
- Reinstatement of vanished features or structures for which there is sound historical evidence
- Repair or reinstatement of boundary features such as gates and railings

- Path systems and lighting and signs
- Long-term planting schemes, such as trees and shrubberies, and restoration of historic garden designs
- Creation of new facilities to interpret the history of the park or to contribute to visitors' enjoyment
- Preparation of Management and Restoration Plans where the costs cannot be met from available sources. Applicants must be able to show that they have completed all reasonable preliminary studies from their own resources. Decisions on such applications will be provided early in the assessment timetable.
- Additional management costs eg of specialist staff on a diminishing basis for a limited period
- Play areas, catering facilities, sports and other leisure facilities such as museums, open air theatres or concert areas may have a part to play in the viable future of a park. Not all of these may be eligible for a grant from HLF but some may be eligible for support from other lottery distributors – it is possible for more than one lottery distributor to contribute to the costs of an overall project.
- Programmes of works over several years

2.3 UPP - Timetable

Announced in January 1996, the Programme was open to applications from 30 April 1996 to 30 September 1996, with grants to be announced by “March 1997 at the latest”. This timetabled application process was “to enable large numbers of projects to be assessed together” and to “ensure a good regional spread of high quality projects both large and small”.

Projects with total costs below £100,000 could submit at any time and be assessed outside the Programme. Applications for park projects submitted before 31 January 1996 were to be processed outside the Programme in the normal way. In the event there were only three projects solely for parks, of which two were awarded grants prior to the Urban Parks Programme: in April 1996 £137,000 was offered towards the restoration of Victoria Park, Cardiff, followed the next month by a £2.5m grant towards the repair of Tollcross Park in Glasgow. In addition a grant was made to the London Borough of Bromley to fund a design competition for the renewal of Crystal Palace Park. All of these projects, funded before the UPP was established, were revisited later as “policy in practice”, developed and a consistent approach was sought.

2.4 Implementing the Urban Parks Programme Guidelines

With the benefit of hindsight the scope of the Urban Parks Programme appears extraordinarily ambitious, and the HLF's self-imposed timetable impossibly difficult to meet. However it was important politically that the UPP launch embodied a bold vision of the renewal of this aspect of the public realm. This vision was encapsulated in Lord Rothschild's speech at the announcement of the Programme in Sheffield's Weston Park in January 1996:

The challenge for the Heritage lottery Fund is to make a real difference. Lottery awards to restore and improve historic parks should be seen as the key to a lasting commitment from urban local authorities towards their open spaces.

As well as the ambitious nature of the Programme that HLF had committed itself to, there were other issues which would increase the difficulty of delivering the Programme:

- Despite Lord Rothschild's commitment, there remained some ambiguity within HLF Trustees and Senior Management about the degree to which urban parks could really be regarded as part of the nation's "heritage".
- There was considerable and continuing uncertainty about the level of funding to be committed to the Programme. At the outset the UPP was described as a three-year programme with a budget of £50m. It was not made clear whether that was an annual or a total budget.
- The total resource of parks and the extent and depth of their decline were unknown, and would not be established until the HLF-commissioned Parks Assessment work undertaken in 1999 and 2000.
- The degree of the dismantling of the management infrastructure for parks (parks departments), the fragmentation of responsibility for their care within local authorities and the loss of skills and experience had not been appreciated.
- There were no national or regional organisations to promote parks, offer support and guidance, set standards or provide a framework in which grant-giving could proceed.
- There was no established methodology for the renewal of public parks.
- Problems associated with the continuing high quality maintenance of parks that had been restored, especially in relation to grounds maintenance and the lack of on-site staff.
- HLF was under-resourced in terms of office accommodation, trained staff, staff support systems and policy making processes as a result of its rapid growth, the unexpected level of income generated by the Lottery and public expectations concerning spending the money.

2.5 The Parks Team

In April 1996 Dr Stewart Harding was appointed by HLF to manage the UPP. He was seconded for a two-year period from the Countryside Commission, where he had administered the "Task Force Trees" storm-damage grants for the South-West Region. Under Dr Harding, the Countryside Commission's grant scheme for historic parks and gardens initiated the restoration of more than fifty nationally important (on the English Heritage Register) sites. These included widely acclaimed projects such as the Lost Gardens of Heligan, Trebah Gardens and Trevarno in Cornwall, all of which made major contributions to economic regeneration in their areas, in employment and tourism generation. Dr Harding also had the advantage as an administrator in having actually worked as a gardener in public parks, and his commitment to them made him able to bridge the gap between park professionals and the heritage establishment.

The original idea in employing Dr Harding was that he should act as a co-ordinator of the programme and adviser to HLF senior management and casework staff. However, such was the level of demand on both staff and management in dealing with grants and policy in other areas of the heritage, that he effectively became the sole face and focus of the Programme throughout the summer of 1996. This time was spent dealing with enquiries from potential applicants and publicising the Programme and its *modus operandi* at numerous conferences and workshops. It became apparent that the demand on the Programme would be significant, even though no

applications had yet been received as there had been more than 400 enquiries and requests for application packs.

In order to prepare for the potentially high number of applications several mechanisms were put into place:

- The Parks Team was established, initially with the internal transfer in August 1996 of Mary Lockwood, an experienced Senior Case Officer (SCO). By January 1997, the Parks Team was at its greatest strength, comprising a Team Leader, Team Secretary, six case officers and three assistants.
- A system for scoring applications in order to enable them to be prioritised for assessment was produced, in liaison with the Parks Advisory Panel, English Heritage and private sector landscape consultants.
- An agreement was reached with English Heritage's Parks and Gardens Team and private sector consultants for fast-tracking expert advice on priority cases.
- Six short-term temporary staff were employed by HLF to log applications and send them to be scored.
- The HLF's Professional Support Services (PSS) team, under Mr Paul Betts, produced for the Parks Team a GANT chart and other project management tools which were to prove invaluable in meeting the critical deadlines of the Programme.

2.6 Policy through Practice

During and after the period April to September 1996, leading up to the first round of applications, it became clear that local authority officers faced many obstacles in making bids to the UPP. These included:

- Lack of local political commitment to the restoration of parks, leading to problems in securing the 25% of partnership funding required of applications.
- Reduced staff availability and inadequate skills to produce applications as a result of the loss of parks departments.
- Inability to guarantee long-term management.
- No strategic framework in which to identify individual parks for bids to the UPP.
- The omission of Parks from local authority lottery strategies and therefore not targeted as priorities.
- Poor level of local knowledge about numbers and profiles of park users.
- General absence of public consultation procedures and no money to pay for them.

In the face of these problems, and with regard to mainstream HLF practice, several informal policy guidelines were established between the Parks Team and the Parks Advisory Panel, generally in response to problems encountered in the assessment of applications and to enquiries from potential applicants:

- High quality restoration plans were essential to supportable applications.
- Restoration plans were better produced by consultants who had developed experience in the restoration of historic landscapes through the English Heritage/Countryside Commission grant schemes, than in-house by local authorities. It became clear that this was a specialised area of work, requiring skills not normally available to local authorities. Even where local authorities retained landscape architects, these were seldom trained or experienced in the restoration of historic landscapes.
- Poor quality restoration plans were harder to deal with than none. The only way to convince local authorities to commission consultants to help them was to make a grant of 75% towards the costs.
- The value of land already in the public realm would not be accepted as partnership funding. This was to discourage local authorities from transferring parks into trusts and using the nominal value of the land to avoid making a local financial contribution, meaning that HLF would be effectively making grants of 100%.
- A commitment to enhanced future revenue funding for improved maintenance standards could be grossed up and treated as a capital cost in the project, thus enabling local authorities to spread their financial commitment over several (usually five) years.
- The return of on-site park managers was an important ingredient in sustainable projects. Accordingly it was accepted that the grossed up costs of employing park managers and other staff were allowable as partnership funding.
- Expensive CCTV systems were not generally looked upon favourably and that HLF would prefer to make a contribution to better security through staff posts.
- Playgrounds, cafes and other new features could be supported but the acceptability of other leisure provision, eg visitor centres, community centres, sports centres, leisure centres, swimming pools would be judged by a rule of thumb: that the facility should enhance the public's enjoyment *of the park*, and should not be a destination in its own right which could just as well be located elsewhere.
- Unlike other HLF grant areas, the re-creation of vanished features such as bandstands, glasshouses and railings etc would be encouraged.

Meanwhile the new Parks Team were undergoing various training events and becoming familiar with the issues and needs facing the parks sector by processing applications for Restoration Plans, for decision by the Small Grants Committee (SGC).

3.0 UPP – Down to Business

3.1 Processing grants - September 1996 to March 1997

By the day before the UPP closing date at the end of September, only three applications had been received. On the final day, a further 186 applications arrived (mostly delivered by hand) and together they amounted to park restoration projects to the value of over £300m, seeking grants from HLF of £227m.

In order to prioritise the best applications for assessment they were sent for initial scoring to six experienced historic landscape consultancies, using the scoring system devised by Dr Harding. This system posed questions on the quality and appropriateness of 14 aspects of the park restoration proposals, with consultants scoring each aspect and also being invited to offer comments on how these aspects might be improved. The system allowed for the scores to be added together to a maximum score of 100, thus yielding a percentage score across a variety of applications, the merits of which would be otherwise difficult to compare. Scores and relevant details were then entered onto a spreadsheet to produce a league table of priority cases. By mid December the scoring process was complete and those achieving a qualitative score of more than 70% were dispatched to English Heritage, CADW or Historic Scotland, as appropriate, for expert advice to feed into the assessment process. The consultants and the Gardens and Landscape Team at English Heritage showed their commitment to the UPP by providing their agreed contributions to the assessment process within the shortest time possible.

The scoring process was a very successful mechanism for identifying the front runners for grant awards. As well as providing scored qualitative judgements from experienced consultants, it also provided informed commentary on each application and indicated where further information or clarification was needed. These comments had the additional advantage of training the Parks Team in the kind of issues they should expect to find during the assessment process.

The Parks Team managed to carry out full assessments of the 48 cases which had scored above 70%, in the period November 1996 to February 1997. Assessment involved a great deal of negotiation with applicants, seeking further information, adjusting project budgets and grant requests and managing second thoughts of applicants. It became clear that many of the applications were still in a state of evolution when received. In addition the Team continued to present to the SGC grant applications for park Restoration Plans to provide the basis of future project implementation bids to the Programme. This was a time of great pressure for the Parks Team and the Parks Advisory Panel, as it had been decided that all the prioritised cases would receive a joint visit from at least one member of the Parks Team and the Panel.

In February 1997, consideration was being given to the 138 cases which would not be presented to Trustees for decision. The pioneering, visionary and experimental profile of the Programme could, it was realised, be compromised by the disappointment of the unsuccessful applicants to the first round. Consequently it was decided that, in a spirit of collaboration, every unsuccessful applicant would be asked to withdraw their applications rather than have them rejected.

However, they were to be given detailed reasons why the projects were felt to be flawed and, more importantly, offered assistance to improve their projects for resubmission. In the majority of these cases, this involved funding consultants to help with Restoration Plans to form the basis

of revised applications. Only seven (ineligible) projects were turned down: all of the remainder were helped towards a revised application. In this way all possible negative publicity was averted and the momentum of the Programme remained intact. The breakdown of unsuccessful first round bids at the time of the Trustees Extraordinary Meeting¹⁵ on Parks was:

- Two had grants approved at the February meeting of the Small Grants Committee
- Seven applicants were advised that their sites were ineligible as they had no, or very little, heritage merit
- 47 applicants were informed of the shortcomings of their applications and advised to withdraw their applications and commission consultants to help produce revised bids. 21 of these had already applied for restoration plan grants and a further eight were in the process of putting restoration plan bids together
- 60 applicants were asked for specific further information in order to bring their applications up to the required standard

It was a great achievement by all concerned that within five months all applicants had been notified of the progress of their applications and that all Trustees papers for their Extraordinary Meeting on 5 March 1997 had been prepared by 28 February 1997. At that meeting Trustees approved 40 projects valued at nearly £80m, awarding grants totalling £58m.

3.2 The first round grant announcement – “Heritage Lottery Fund restoring park life” - May 1997

The grand announcement scheduled for March was, in the event, delayed until 15 May 1997 because a general election was expected on a number of dates from 20 March onwards, necessitating a six-week embargo on any news which might be seen to be politically influential. HLF's public relations team put together a press release and package to announce the grants and PR events took place all over the UK at the successful parks. Speaking at the launch at Sefton Park, Liverpool, Lord Rothschild said:

For far too long the urban heritage of public spaces has gone unrecognised. These parks are a fundamental part of our working, everyday heritage and are as much a part of modern life as the conservation of the past. HLF's policy has been to concentrate on bringing back conspicuous care, peace and security to parks.

HLF's bold lead in this area was rewarded with a great deal of interest from national newspapers and specialist horticulture and landscape sector magazines, and this was supported by an extensive programme of national, regional and local radio and TV interviews. Newspaper coverage appeared in the Daily Mail, Guardian, Evening Standard, Daily Telegraph, Times, Financial Times and live radio broadcasts via phone-ins from around the country. Television coverage included the main ITN and BBC news slots as well as 28 regional news items.

¹⁵ Heritage Lottery Fund Trustees Paper Parks 1 – “Urban Parks Programme” – 5 March 1997

3.3 Euphoria, expansion, revision and backlash - 1997/98

The experience of dealing with so many applications as a batch of individual and not easily comparable projects in competition with each other, suggested that the future of the UPP would be better served as a sector of the mainstream HLF grant process. This decision had been anticipated by HLF's reluctance to announce a large number of unsuccessful bidders to the first round. By offering extended help to first-round and new applicants in the form of restoration plans, ongoing advice and encouragement, it was inevitable that the competitive element of the bid process, so unpopular with applicants, would be abandoned – at least until such time that the full meaning and requirements of a whole park restoration had become established and widely understood. This decision allowed assessment of cases to proceed at a speed more in keeping with their inherent complexities and the capacity of the Parks Team. A guidance note “Historic Landscape Survey and Restoration Management Plan”¹⁴ was issued in June 1997, to accompany the Application Pack, which clarified HLF requirements and procedures relating to bids for restoration plan funding.

Meanwhile the widespread public and media approval over the grants announcement, led HLF Trustees and Senior Management, in May 1997, to allocate £75m to the UPP for the financial year 1997-98.¹⁵ The success of the grants in capturing the imagination of key players in the field was manifested in the preliminary meetings at York University under the guidance of Peter Goodchild of successful applicants who later banded together to form the Urban Parks Forum, a national body committed to the promotion of parks and open spaces and the gathering and exchange of best practice in the field. It also led to an initial meeting between Lord Rothschild and Dr Hilary Taylor and Peter Vickers to examine the feasibility of setting up a Landscape Heritage Trust to champion the cause of historic designed landscapes. These developments were encouraging as it had always been an underlying, though not stated, aim of the UPP to galvanise activity across the sector in response to HLF's lead.

3.3.1 Legal problems

Early euphoria surrounding the first round of grant announcements was to evaporate over the following summer. There were difficulties with local authority solicitors' objections to HLF's standard contract, particularly over the requirement for collateral warranties which was dropped in October. Another legal difficulty was identified by Farrer & Co, HLF's solicitors, concerning the “fettering” of local authorities.¹⁶ Their opinion suggested that local authorities could not, legally, commit themselves to future revenue spending as this might fetter the discretion of the authority in future years. There were also delays associated with local authorities' lack of capacity and experience in implementing such large projects and problems over contractual and monitoring arrangements which began to dissipate the Programme's momentum.

3.3.2 Regionalisation

In the meantime, HLF had decided in June 1997 to split its Operations Team (caseworkers) into twelve regional teams, one for each of the Home Countries and nine for the English Regions. In order to accommodate this change it became necessary to abandon specialist teams – the Parks

¹⁴ Heritage Lottery Fund “Historic Landscape Survey and Restoration Management Plan” – Guidance note, 26 June 1997

¹⁵ Heritage Lottery Fund Allocation Report, May 1997

¹⁶ Letter from Farrer & Co to HLF, 5 June 1997

Team and the Fast-Track Team – and divide the staff between the new regional teams. The change in working practices came into effect subsequent to HLF’s move into new and larger premises in Holbein Place, at which time Dr Harding became Policy Adviser on Historic Landscapes, the first member of the proposed Policy Team to be headed by Rosemary Ewles. Dr Harding’s period of secondment was extended to March 2000. Internal co-ordination on parks casework was to be achieved through the occasional meetings of the Parks Practice Group.

3.3.3 Value for money considerations and budget cuts

Doubts within HLF about the UPP seemed to resurface over the summer of 1997. The Parks Team was audited in June and given a clean bill of health, but Trustees’ concern over the level of spending on parks, and particularly the cost of individual schemes, resulted in the commissioning of a study into value-for-money in park projects, carried out by Land Use Consultants.¹⁷

In October 1997, as demand increased across all heritage sectors, HLF’s Senior Management Team reduced the indicative parks budget by £26m to £49m, and it became necessary to adjust the messages given to potential applicants. In order to avoid turning down worthy applications, the concept of phased applications was introduced so that projects could be subdivided into financially manageable packages. This approach was put into practice with a number of large parks being awarded phase 1 grants (eg Heaton Park, Manchester), with the expectation that further bids would be submitted for later phases of whole park projects.

3.3.4 Trustees Paper

Urban Parks – a strategic approach – November 1997¹⁸

The growing disenchantment with the Urban Parks Programme amongst senior management and Trustees and concerns over the reduced level of income received by HLF, resulted in a policy paper setting out proposals for UPP’s future management. This paper gave an overview of the UPP to date and a justification for its continued existence. Its main recommendations were:

- HLF should continue to give very high priority to the programme
- Grant support should be extended from the original period of three years to five years (to 2002), but not necessarily at the same level
- Only applications based on restoration plans produced to the HLF model brief should be accepted, whether these were funded by HLF or others
- HLF should consider support for a training initiative in this field

3.3.5 Restoration plans – continued funding?

The above recommendations were approved by Trustees, but one recommendation was the source of some controversy. Senior Management Team had insisted on the following recommendation being included in the policy paper:

¹⁷ Findings of this study “Review of Project Costs in the Urban Parks Programme” are reported in HLF Trustees Papers 206/45 item 14 “The Urban Parks Programme”, 26 January 1999

¹⁸ HLF Trustees Paper 193/32 HLF item 15, 25 November 1997

- HLF should *cease* funding the production of park restoration plans, while allowing applicants to offer the costs of preparing a plan to HLF's brief as "sunk costs" in partnership funding.

This recommendation was based partly on the pressure of administering many small grants, but principally over a perceived inconsistency with mainstream HLF practice over the funding of restoration plans. Generally HLF did not fund a broad category of preliminary studies which it regarded as "feasibility studies". Senior Management Team placed a moratorium on funding any more restoration plans in November 1997, an embargo which continued until further awards were made at the Small Grants Committee Meeting of June 1998.

-However, the importance of restoration plans to the UPP was critical in ensuring that future applications would be for high quality projects. So strongly did the Parks Advisory Panel feel about this proposed change in UPP practice that they took the unprecedented step of tabling a paper¹⁹ for Trustees' consideration. The Panel said (*inter alia*):

We are especially concerned at any proposal to stop production of park restoration plans ... We are dismayed at the scale of the cuts proposed for the current year (loss of £25 million from a budget of £75 million)

As a result of the Panel's representations, Trustees agreed to defer a decision pending further information which would clarify:

- The consistency of approach between restoration plans, conservation plans and feasibility studies
- The extent and regional distribution of awards made for restoration plans
- The degree of any moral commitment to implement schemes arising from HLF funded plans

The further information requested was presented to Trustees in January 1998 in the form of a revised version of the November Trustees Paper,²⁰ with an introductory note. The regional spread and extent of restoration plan grants were provided as an appendix to the revised paper, demonstrating a widespread and equitable distribution of awards. The recommendation referring to restoration plan funding now read:

- HLF should retain discretion to fund the production of park restoration plans in line with policy on conservation plans, landscape restoration plans and feasibility studies currently under consideration

Trustees were considering, at the same meeting, a policy paper compiled by the Operation Team entitled "The Funding of Options Appraisals, Feasibility Studies, Landscape Restoration Plans, Conservation Plans and Development Costs for capital Projects".²¹ This paper said:

¹⁹ Appended as "Parks Advisory Panel's response" to HLF Trustees Paper 195/34 HLF item 16 "Urban Parks – a strategic approach, update", 22 January 1998

²⁰ HLF Trustees Paper 195/34 HLF item 16 "Urban Parks – a strategic approach, update", 22 January 1998

²¹ HLF Trustees Paper 195/34 HLF item 15 "The Funding of Options Appraisals, Feasibility Studies, Landscape Restoration Plans, Conservation Plans and Development Costs for capital Projects", 22 January 1998

It is important to stress that there are very real and direct conservation benefits in producing both conservation plans and historic landscape restoration management plans ... Trustees will note that less than £1 million has been awarded in grant aid [to the latter] and that the grant expenditure accounts for 0.7% of the UPP budget.

The paper recommended (*inter alia*):

- The HLF will consider applications for the funding of conservation plans
- Given the strategic objectives of the UPP ... HLF should continue to fund historic landscape restoration plans. However, officers will assess such applications in the context of the heritage importance of the park, the ability (financial and technical) of the applicant to undertake such studies themselves and the regional spread of HLF grants in this area
- Given the fact that only 0.7% of the budget for the UPP has been awarded to landscape restoration plans to date, it is recommended that grant expenditure on such plans accounts for approximately the same proportion of expenditure of the UPP budget for the next financial year

The continued funding of restoration plans was confirmed in an internal HLF desk guidance summary "Policy Implementation"²² of 23 March 1998 and further ratified at the Small Grants Committee Meeting of 2 June 1998,²³ where it was agreed that park restoration plans should hitherto be seen as *bona fide* conservation "products" in their own right.

3.4 Landscape Heritage Trust 1998 - 1999

Meanwhile the growing interest and activity within public parks, stimulated by the HLF awards and publicity, was further highlighting the lack of any central body or agency to champion and advise on parks. During 1998, HLF grant-aided a study into the potential for a Landscape Heritage Trust (LHT), a new independent body to champion the needs of historic parks and gardens. The study, conducted by PriceWaterHouseCoopers produced compelling evidence to show the problems caused by the absence of such a champion; the economic potential of the sector; and of the need for joined-up thinking in policy. The idea was put forward by Dr Hilary Taylor and Peter Vickers who worked with the Countryside Agency via its Countryside Trust to submit the application.

HLF were represented on the LHT steering group by Stewart Harding and Mary Lockwood. It was chaired by Tim Smit, director of the Lost Gardens of Heligan and the Eden Project and included representatives of English Heritage, CADW, Historic Scotland and the National Trust. The major conclusion of this lengthy study²⁴ was that the only body with sufficient stature to address the whole spectrum of need in the parks sector was Government itself, and reported as much to the Select Committee Inquiry into Town and Country Parks which took place in July 1999. The exercise, reported to HLF Trustees at their December 1999 meeting,²⁵ was invaluable in documenting the issues faced by the sector and in raising awareness.

²² HLF all staff memo "Policy Implementation", 23 March 1998

²³ HLF Small Grants Committee Meeting, "Historic Landscape Restoration Plans", 2 June 1998

²⁴ PriceWaterhouseCoopers (1999) Landscape Heritage Trust. Unpublished report for the steering group of the Landscape Heritage Trust

²⁵ HLF Trustees Paper 216/55 HLF paper 8 "Urban Parks Programme – Update", 14 December 1999

3.5 The Urban Parks Forum 1997-2001

The HLF, through the UPP, extended its expertise and encouragement to the Urban Parks Forum. Set up initially by the University of York, after a one-off workshop organised by the Garden History Society, this began as an informal grouping of park managers and consultants working on HLF-sponsored restoration projects, coming together to discuss progress and disseminate good practice. Its seminars and conferences proved very popular, with HLF taking a lead in its early days: Dr Harding attended and addressed all the gatherings of the Forum in 1997/98/99. The existence of the Urban Parks Forum was a tangible example of the UPP having prompted initiatives beyond its own activities.

Urban parks lost an influential champion when Lord Rothschild stepped down as HLF Chairman at the end of March 1998, to be replaced by Dr Eric Anderson. Rosemary Ewles, Director of Policy, also left HLF at this time to be replaced by Dr Simon Olding.

4.0 HLF's Strategic Approach and wider recognition for the UPP– 1998/99

4.1 Procedural changes

1998 saw HLF refining a more strategic approach to its grant-giving, as its role in the conservation of the nature's heritage and its relationship to other organisations began to clarify. There was also a move towards greater consistency across the different heritage sectors with which HLF was concerned. The role of the advisory panels was reviewed and the Parks Advisory Panel was disbanded, holding its final meeting on 28 April. Two members, Mr David Lambert and Mr Alan Barber, were enlisted to the newly formed Historic Buildings and Land Panel to advise on parks cases. Development was also underway by HLF's Operations Team of the Two Stage Process and on the introduction of a requirement for the preparation of Conservation Plans in all large projects, the latter under the leadership of Kate Clark of English Heritage.

These two major procedural changes were introduced to increase the quality and financial accuracy of applications in all heritage sectors. Both borrowed heavily from standard UPP practice. The Two Stage Process mimicked in many respects the Restoration Plan bid/Implementation bid model, and the requirement for the production of Conservation Plans closely followed the philosophy that informed the UPP approach of requiring Restoration Plans, but there were some differences. Conservation Plans required a firm understanding of the value of the heritage asset, expressed as a "conservation statement" upon which proposals for the conservation of the asset could be built in the bid. The brief for park Restoration Plans, on the other hand, demanded a seamless link between the analysis of the asset, the restoration philosophy and the costed proposals.

The UPP was allowed to continue with restoration plans which became "stage minus one" in what was effectively, for parks, a Three Stage Process. This innovation had the additional advantage of providing for development grants to be awarded between stage 1 (initial pass) and stage 2 (implementation grant), bringing greater certainty about detailed project design and costs.

It was also decided by HLF to introduce a biannual competitive batching system for very large grants of over £5m across all the heritage sectors. Grants of between £1m and £5m would be decided by full Trustees and grants below £1m by the Country Committees for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, which replaced the Small Grants Committee.

4.2 Proposed revised strategy for the UPP, May-September 1998

By May 1998 it had become clear, in the light of reduced sales of Lottery tickets and the “top-slicing” of the fund available to the “Good Causes” to create the New Opportunities Fund (NOF), that HLF would have to adapt to a reduced funding climate. There had also been some criticism of the tendency of HLF to make fewer grants but of higher individual value than the other Lottery distributors, and there was a growing emphasis on funding people rather than things. As a result HLF had developed a general presumption in favour of smaller grants. Consequently, in the interests of consistency with other heritage sectors, a revised approach was proposed for the UPP,²⁶ as follows:

- That increased emphasis is put on funding landscape restoration plans, on funding for up to five years of park managers and on funding projects in phases, in order to reduce the size of capital grants
- That applicants who successfully complete phase 1 projects be permitted to apply for grants for second and subsequent phases
- That the length of the UPP be extended for at least a further two years to accommodate a phased approach to capital grants
- That the policy requirement that all bids must be based on a full landscape restoration plan be relaxed to permit the consideration of relatively minor or discrete repair projects where a whole park restoration is not required

These proposals were accepted in the light of a continuing high level of demand from the parks sector. The demand was assessed in the light of some 80-90 restoration plans under preparation, which were estimated to amount to a pipeline of future grant requests of some £124 million. A “policy paper” from the Head of Operations “Allocation of budgets, October 98 – March 99” presented to Trustees in September 1998 said:

In order properly to respond to perceived needs, to encourage local commitment and support, to deliver the benefits of HLF regenerative money as widely as possible, and to satisfy the expectation of those who have received funding for restoration plans, we propose to manage bids downwards, preferring to use HLF resources to focus LA support for their parks on a combination of a 3 to 5 year commitment to a park manager, coupled with a grant to perhaps the first phase of a restoration programme.

²⁶ Draft Policy Paper “Proposed revised strategy for the Urban Parks Programme”, 28 May 1998 and internal HLF memos Stephen Johnson to Stewart Harding, 16 June 1998 and Stewart Harding to Stephen Johnson, 1 July 1998. The phased approach to UPP grants was confirmed in HLF Trustees Paper 202/41 HLF item 12 “Allocation of Budgets, October ’98 – March ’99”, 10 September 1998

4.3 Directions of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport 1998

HLF received in 1998 the new Secretary of State's Policy Directions,²⁷ which proved to be a landmark in conservation grant-aid. These stated that the HLF must include in its aims in awarding grant-aid (abbreviated):

- promoting the public good
- covering the complete range of national heritage
- promoting access to the heritage for people from all sections of society
- the need to promote knowledge of and interest in the heritage by children and young people
- furthering the aims of sustainable development

and must take into account (abbreviated):

- their own assessment of needs of the national heritage
- the need to ensure that all parts of the UK have access to funding
- the scope for reducing economic and social deprivation

These Directions helped reinforce the importance of the UPP as the programme was already delivering many of these objectives.

4.4 Policy on involving young people and children 1998-99

Government thinking was beginning to have a greater impact on HLF's grant-making in other ways too. The Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) had become concerned over the poor national provision for children's play and asked the lottery distributors and others for details of how children's play benefited from lottery grants. Thanks to the UPP, HLF were able to respond in positive fashion thanks to the UPP. It was pointed out that not only did improved parks offer a great deal to children's play in a general way, but also that grants of around £8m had been awarded for the provision of new and renewed playgrounds, paddling pools and other play facilities. One HLF funded project was for Coram's Fields, an inner-city London park devoted exclusively to children's play.

Ironically, an internal HLF audit in April 1999 found that "The Urban Parks policy did not have any reference to encourage involvement by young people and children". This oversight was corrected by this wording, agreed at the Trustees Meeting of December 1999,²⁸ to be included in forthcoming revisions of the Application Pack:

The restoration of urban parks should address the needs of young people and children in their involvement in, and enjoyment of, our parks heritage. This may be achieved through the provision of facilities for play and informal games and sport, through educational programmes, through volunteering and through achieving an enhanced level of

²⁷ The Directions are reproduced as Annex 2 in Heritage Lottery Fund (1999) *Strategic Plan 1999-2002* London: Heritage Lottery Fund

²⁸ HLF Trustees Paper 216/55 HLF paper 8 "Urban Parks Programme – Update", 14 December 1999

safety and care in the park environment. Applicants should demonstrate that the needs of young people and children have been considered in their bids.

4.5 HLF Strategic Plan 1999-2002

The above changes and developments fed into the forthcoming first HLF Three Year Strategic Plan. In its consultation document *Towards a Strategic Plan for Lottery Funding for the Heritage* (1998),²⁹ the HLF proposed winding up the Urban Parks Programme. Although it was to remain a "core scheme" the indicative allocation for the programme showed a reduction from £30 million in 1998-99 to £11 million in 2001-02 and the draft stated that the UPP "will be drawing to a close".

This proposal provoked the greatest response received through the consultation exercise, with a vociferous and unanimous reaction epitomised by the House of Commons Culture Select Committee report (January 1999)³⁰ on the HLF which took evidence at the same time. It praised the "experience and excellent track record of the Heritage Lottery Fund in this area":

Of all the HLF's many programmes and initiatives, that which has been most singularly praised in evidence is the Urban Parks Programme. ...From an original intention to commit £50 million to the Programme, the fund has made grants to over 200 parks to a value in excess of £100 million. In doing so, the Fund has ensured that the Lottery has had a marked impact in communities which might not otherwise have benefited. The Programme has acted as a spur to a wider revival of interest in the regenerative role of urban parks.

The MPs concluded that "This Committee considers it vital that the total commitment of National Lottery resources to urban green spaces is maintained or even enhanced in coming years" and that "it would send the wrong signals if the Urban Parks Programme's separate identity within the Heritage Lottery Fund was not retained". In addition to these comments, 26 local authorities wrote to object to the budget cuts to the UPP, five local authorities wrote to express their explicit support for the Programme and further objections to closing the Programme were received from many organisations.

As a result of these comments, the Programme was retained in the new Strategic Plan.³¹ In its response to the Select Committee,³² HLF said:

We propose that the Urban Parks Programme will continue to have its own identity and to maintain our investment in it at £30 million per annum for the duration of our Strategic Plan [to 2002].

²⁹ Heritage Lottery Fund (1998) *Towards a Strategic Plan for Lottery Funding for the Heritage* Consultation Document London: Heritage Lottery Fund

³⁰House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee (1999) *The Heritage Lottery Fund* London: The Stationery Office

³¹ Heritage Lottery Fund (1999) *Strategic Plan 1999-2002* London: Heritage Lottery Fund

³² Heritage Lottery Fund (1999) Response to House of Commons, Media and Sport Committee, 28 January 1999

4.6 Trustees Paper Urban Parks Programme – policy update, January 1999

The UPP, its continued existence threatened throughout most of 1998, ended the 98/99 financial year in a more secure position, following wider recognition of its achievements in pioneering revitalisation of a moribund heritage sector. The reprieve for the UPP had been confirmed in the HLF *Strategic Plan 1999-2002* which said:

The consultation process and the Select Committee strongly supported this programme which will continue for the duration of the Strategic Plan. In this period grants will focus on parks in areas of high social deprivation, and will continue to provide for the repair of park features and fabric, for improved facilities, including playgrounds, and for park officers.

The policy paper of January 1999³³ provided a resume of progress to date, the main features of which were:

- Since 1996, 433 applications had been received, seeking £429 million in grants
- Grants of c£1.5 million had been approved for 120 restoration plans at an average grant of c£12,000
- Grants of £108 million had been approved for 85 projects at an average grant of £1.27 million
- Some 20 project manager posts and 40 park manager or ranger posts had been created
- Each of the ten most deprived districts had received grants, amounting to £10 million in 20 awards
- Of the 50 most deprived districts, 38 had received grants worth £64 million with live bids for a further £42 million

The paper also reported on the findings of the Land Use Consultants study “Review of Project Costs in the Urban Parks Programme”. The report concluded that “cost provisions at application stage are not shown to be high for work in this predominantly landscape sector”. The report provided helpful guidance on how project costs might be more accurately assessed in future applications.

The final part of the paper introduced the findings of The Urban Parks Programme Questionnaire. This was the first attempt to gather some basic information about the number, extent, location and condition of the UK’s urban parks. A simple one page questionnaire was sent to 250 local authorities in August 1998 and received 156 replies, a response rate of 62%. The main results from 156 local authorities suggested that there were around 5,000 parks nationally of national or local historic importance and that the majority were in poor or only fair condition and that most were either declining or remaining stable. This quick piece of research was important in establishing and expressing the broad context in which the UPP operated, and in giving impetus to a more detailed study.

³³ HLF Trustees Paper 206/45 HLF item 14, “The Urban Parks Programme”, 26 January 1999

5.0 Following the UPP lead – interest from other agencies, 1999-2000

5.1 Parks Needs Assessment 1999-2001

The Public Parks Needs Assessment was part of a group of similar work being carried out by HLF in all heritage sectors, designed to enable HLF to target grants to areas of greatest need. HLF made £10,000 available for carrying out what would be the first ever comprehensive national survey of local authority managed parks and open space. In order to extend the research, a contribution of £5,000 was negotiated with the Head of Gardens and Landscape at English Heritage and a further £10,000 with The Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions' (DETR), making a total funding package of £25,000. ILAM agreed to make an in-kind contribution to the project and ILAM Services were commissioned to carry out the research, utilising a questionnaire designed by Dr Harding.

Returns from 37% of local authorities began to show the scale of the problem and the scale of what the 1999 Select Committee report into parks would call the "information deficit". HLF consequently funded a second phase in 2000, commissioning additional work from the new Urban Parks Forum, again with English Heritage and, by then, DTLR funding, with additional funding from the Countryside Agency to broaden the survey to country parks. This second phase increased the response rate to 85% (405 out of 475) local authorities. The main findings of the report³⁴ are as follows:

- 82% of the population does not have access to good quality parks
- The accumulated revenue underspend in the years 1980 to 2000 is estimated at £1.3 billion
- Annual revenue expenditure on parks and open spaces is £126 million less than in 1979/80, an average shortfall of £265,000 per authority
- There has been little or no capital investment in parks in 20 years
- In 20 years over a quarter of basic visitor facilities such as toilets, cafes and shelters have been lost
- Over a quarter of all ornamental gates have been removed
- Over half the bandstands and nearly 70% of glasshouses in public parks have been demolished
- 32% of historic urban parks are declining from fair to poor condition
- Inclusion on the English Heritage *Register of parks and gardens of special historic interest* has no impact on a park's condition or trend in condition
- Public parks receive an estimated 1.5 billion visits a year, with historic parks receiving some 3-400 million.
- Parks of historic interest represent 9% of the total number of open spaces and 32% of the total area
- The total number of parks of historic interest exceeds 2,500

³⁴ Urban Parks Forum (2001) *Public Parks Assessment* – Report to Heritage Lottery Fund; Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions; English Heritage; Countryside Agency. Caversham: Urban Parks Forum

- The total number of all parks exceeds 27,000
- 13% of local authorities consider that their entire stock of parks and open spaces to be in poor condition
- The condition of 39% of all parks and open spaces is declining
- Good parks are getting better and poor parks are getting worse
- Parks of historic interest have disproportionately suffered from spending cuts
- Country Parks are reported to be in better condition, though the loss of features and decline of the built elements are on a par with historic urban parks
- Parks in the most deprived areas are generally in poorer condition and their decline is continuing

The Public Park Assessment was published on the HLF web-site in June 2001. HLF's sponsorship of this research has gone far beyond its own internal use and made a major impact on public policy. The findings were widely discussed in the media over the summer of 2001.

5.2 Town and Country Parks - Select Committee Inquiry (1999)

Perhaps the most significant development for the UPP and for the nation's parks was the announcement in early 1999 that there would be a House of Commons Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee inquiry into Town and Country Parks. HLF submitted written evidence in May 1999 and oral evidence was given by Anthea Case, Director of HLF, and Dr Harding in July.

The Select Committee's report³⁵ was damning about the condition of the nation's public parks and recommended urgent remedial action. The committee said [para.181]:

We are shocked at the weight of evidence, far beyond our expectations, about the extent of the problems parks have faced in the last 30 years We have inherited an infrastructure of parks of priceless value and their documented and visible decline represents a wasted opportunity of tragic proportions.

Amongst the conclusions and recommendations in the report were the following (abbreviated):

- It is essential that adequate research should be undertaken, and accurate records kept
- All local authorities ought to know the extent of their parks in terms of their number, size, attributes and facilities. By means of a regular and statistically valid evaluation of their parks, local authorities should estimate visitor numbers, and know something of who they are and what they think of their parks
- Parks are key features in the renaissance of our urban areas. They have been instrumental in the regeneration of New York, Barcelona and Paris. They need to be recognised and resourced as such by central and local government. The Social Exclusion Unit should give a high priority to making parks attractive places where all the community can enjoy themselves
- Municipal parks should retain their integrity and historic character

³⁵ House of Commons Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee (1999) *Town and Country Parks*, 3 vols. London: The Stationery Office

- Urgent action is needed to find effective ways of stopping the loss and neglect of park ornaments and ornamental buildings
- Making parks safe, and making them feel safe, must be a priority for local authorities. Plans for park safety should be included in all local authority Crime and Disorder Strategies
- If the decline of parks is to be arrested and reversed it is essential that there should be sufficient high quality staff
- In implementing Best Value, we expect all local authorities to have a Master Plan for parks and greenspace and to ensure that local people, as well as members of the Council, have easy access to a regularly updated version of it The public should have easy access to detailed plans for each park or small group of greenspaces and know what budget is allocated to each one
- There is a good case for the establishment of a new Agency, which should be known as “The Urban Parks and Greenspaces Agency”

The report contained criticisms of many organisations which, it was felt, had failed to adequately address the problems faced by public parks. The Countryside Agency, the Local Government Association, English Heritage and the Audit Commission were all found to be wanting.

The inquiry heard repeated testimonies to the effectiveness of the UPP from local authorities and others which it reflected in its report. It says:

The main impetus for action on historic parks has come in the last three years from the HLF... due to the impetus of the UPP the agencies are beginning to remedy the situation [of under-representation of public parks on the Register]... The introduction of the UPP reflected HLF's view that investing in urban historic parks ... would offer a triple dividend of conservation, regeneration and improved quality of life for a significant element of the UK's population... The Programme has been enormously popular. Against an original estimate of £50m over three years, to date, HLF has received 462 applications and has awarded £117m in grants. This figure includes £1.6m for 128 restoration plans and £115m for implementation of 93 projects.

However, the report cautions:

It might seem as if a great deal is happening, but we need to remember the scale of the problem. There are at least 5,000 major local authority parks.

While recognising the “considerable enthusiasm” expressed for the UPP, the report identifies the following problems:

- Local authorities sometimes lack the expertise to put forward good bids
- Unsuccessful bids still take a lot of work and leave local “friends” groups very disappointed
- A successful bid ties up park resources for years to come on a single park
- Local authorities tend to put forward their largest eligible park for a bid, because a bid for small parks requires almost as much effort
- Smaller parks, even if in greater need of renovation, are neglected

Despite these caveats, which concerned matters largely beyond HLF's control, Trustees and Senior Management felt that the Select Committee report had recognised the valuable lead and

contribution to the regeneration of parks and had highlighted the need for other agencies to follow that lead with their own meaningful contributions.

5.3 UPP – Policy Abstracts, May 1999

As HLF matured as an organisation the number of policy decisions, directions and desk advice had multiplied to such an extent that it had become difficult for application assessment officers to keep up to date, and impossible for the increasing numbers of new staff to come up to speed. Consequently HLF produced a series of Policy Abstracts to assist case officers in their assessment work. One of the results of the regionalisation of assessment teams was to introduce inconsistencies in officers' perception of what special arrangements existed in relation to park bids and what could be funded. The Policy Abstract³⁶ provided an opportunity to reinforce the principles of UPP to staff, in particular to emphasise the following areas where practice tended to differ from the general HLF approach:

- Trustees have supported grants which go far beyond restoration of existing infrastructure
- Recreation of vanished features (eg bandstands, gates and railings, park buildings) could be supported
- Addition of new features (eg playgrounds, cafes, new gardens and other landscape features) could be supported
- Increased spending on maintenance, security arrangements, and funding of on-site staff could be supported

5.4 Trustees Papers Urban Parks Programme updates –October and December 1999

The findings of the Landscape Heritage Trust Feasibility Study and of the Town and Country Parks Select Committee were reported to the Historic Buildings and Land panel in October 1999 and HLF Trustees in December 1999.³⁷ It was agreed at the Trustees Meeting that a letter be sent to the Chairman of the Select Committee welcoming the report and recommending that the potential for a national Urban Parks and Greenspaces Agency be investigated.

The main body of these papers, however, addressed concerns raised about tree removal and the speed of tree clearance in UPP projects. The paper offered a detailed explanation and justification of the UPP approach which was endorsed and praised by the Historic Buildings and Land Panel. A shorter version of the same argument was presented to Trustees and endorsed by them as a practical and justifiable approach to park restoration.

The Trustees Paper also clarified HLF policy and UPP practice in relation to future maintenance costs in urban park grants. The paper recognised that the decline of parks had been so severe

³⁶ HLF Policy Abstract – Urban Parks Programme, 12 May 1999

³⁷ HLF Paper to Historic Buildings and Land Panel “Urban Parks Programme – Update” EPB 34 item 8, 26 October 1999 and HLF Trustees Paper 216/55 HLF paper 8 “Urban Parks Programme – Update”, 14 December 1999

that a capital grant scheme alone was unlikely to succeed unless supported by an increase in maintenance funding. The need had been addressed by UPP in these ways:

- Using capital grants to lever a commitment to increased revenue spend without a contribution from HLF
- Allowing the grossed-up increase in future maintenance spend as partnership funding
- Grossing up the cost of new posts (park manager, head gardener, ranger) and treating the cost as a capital item

5.5 The Garden History Society Study into *The Economic Contribution of historic parks, gardens and designed landscapes* (2000)

Through the Policy Team, the HLF grant-aided research by the Garden History Society into the economic contribution of historic parks and gardens.³⁸ Although this was largely a review and scoping exercise covering all historic parks and gardens, not just urban parks, it laid the foundations for building a key part of the conservation case: not just cost-benefit analysis but the wider contribution which regeneration of parks can make to a local economy.

5.6 Policy Statement on Urban Parks and Designed Landscapes³⁹ – March 2000

The Policy Team at HLF became responsible for producing regular policy statements: digests of policy positions designed to keep potential applicants and HLF case officers informed. The above statement reiterated policy in relation to the assessment of bids for urban parks and designed landscapes. It included the current policies on:

- Restoration plan funding and the use of consultants
- Funding of restoration and repair of landscape, infrastructure and horticulture
- Recreation of vanished features integral to the design
- Funding of new features to enhance public enjoyment of parks
- Funding of new posts
- Funding of increased maintenance spending
- Targeting urban park grants to deprived areas

The policy statement effectively records the establishment and adoption by HLF of all the main elements of an approach to the restoration of public parks that had been worked out, and fought for, in the first four years of the UPP.

Dr Harding's four-year secondment to the HLF ended on 31st March 2000 and he returned to the Countryside Agency. He was replaced as policy advisor by Lorna McRobie, former Head of

³⁸ This report was subsequently published as Askwith, C (2000) "The Economic Contribution of Historic Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes: a review of existing data and research and recommendations for future research" *Cultural Trends* 35. London: Policy Studies Institute

³⁹ HLF "Policy Statement on Urban Parks and Designed Landscapes", 1 March 2000

Gardens and Landscape at English Heritage, who also took over a wider role as advisor on countryside and wildlife under the new title of Policy Advisor: Landscape and Natural Heritage.

5.7 Trustees Paper

Public Parks: Review of Urban Parks Programme – October 2000

In this policy paper to Trustees⁴⁰, Ms McRobie summarised the background and achievements to date of the UPP. She said:

The initial response from local authorities is hugely encouraging, with parks sectors emerging into the daylight from decades of degradation and obscurity, and communities waking up with interest and enthusiasm to the opportunities and benefits which can be won. HLF can be justifiably proud of its role as a catalyst for change in this area of the historic environment.

The paper notes that by 30th September 2000, HLF will have awarded, or given approval in principle at Stage 1, grants as follows:

- Over £211.61m for public parks, of which £1.61m was for restoration plans
- An average of £60.4m per year for 3.5 years
- Grants to 148 projects at an average of £1.41m per project
- Grants for 133 restoration plans at an average of £12,110 per plan

The expanded remit of the policy advisor prompted an overdue consideration of the needs of Country Parks, open to the public, and a recommendation to include these in a renamed grant scheme to be called the Public Parks Programme (a proposal which was adopted under the name the Public Parks Initiative). The paper also recommended:

- The integration of the public parks programme into mainstream funding from 2002
- A change in the procedures and guidance for awards to local authorities for public parks, as part of the current 2000/01 Application Pack revisions, to reflect the needs of the sector and with greater emphasis on the community involvement, business management and long term maintenance
- An extension of eligibility from 2001 to cover ALL local authority managed parks of heritage merit
- A discussion, during the next Strategic Plan proposals for April 2002, an increase in the notional budget for parks to more adequately reflect current expenditure and based upon the forthcoming conclusions of the Needs Assessment Research Phase 2 and the outcomes of the government white papers
- Recognition of the need for HLF to continue to operate more widely than strictly necessary in its role as lottery distributor and to take the lead in discussions etc of substantial benefit to the sector

The paper goes on to note:

⁴⁰ HLF Trustees Paper 225/64 HLF paper 12 “Public parks: Review of Urban Parks Programme”, 17 October 2000

As a catalyst for change UPP has been remarkable in what it has achieved so far not only within the sector, but also in raising the profile of parks at government level and improving HLF's image overall. It is hoped that HLF can build on this success.

SECTION 2: THE INFLUENCE OF THE URBAN PARKS PROGRAMME

6.0 Introduction

In the five years since the first awards under the UPP were announced in May 1997, around £250m have been committed to park restoration projects. The HLF brief (November 2001)⁴¹ for an Evaluation of the UPP said:

It is fair to say that in terms of “galvanising thinking” the programme can already demonstrate substantial success and be seen to be delivering on a range of current government agendas. HLF’s commitment to this sector is widely recognised as both visionary and hugely effective in stimulating change.

This section seeks to identify and record the effects of the UPP’s influence in the wider context: in the policy development of other agencies; on Government policy; on opinions, awareness and attitudes generally. It looks first at how the key formal and informal policies of the UPP were disseminated, and then records the tangible signs of development of national policy in this sector.

6.1 Means of Influencing - Broadcasting the UPP Message

As well as the widespread availability of the *The Urban Parks Programme Guidance Note*, the approach of the UPP was publicised through a range of mechanisms. Without the commitment to the Programme shown by Lord Rothschild and the HLF Trustees, in particular Sir Richard Carew Pole, and by the Chairman of the Buildings and Land panel, Dame Jennifer Jenkins, the Programme might well have lacked the vision to succeed. The energy and enthusiasm of those involved in making the UPP a success at the practical level is also worthy of note: the members of the Parks Advisory Panel and the Parks Team were indefatigable in the critical period of the UPP’s establishment in 1996 and 1997.

As head of the UPP, Stewart Harding made a very significant contribution to publicity, public relations and refining and promulgating the adopted methodology. He addressed numerous conferences and gave dozens of TV, radio and press interviews. He also contributed articles to sector journals, attended launches and contributed to academic research at the Sorbonne and the University of Sheffield. The nature of the role Dr Harding performed for HLF meant that he continued to spread the influence of the UPP in similar ways after he left HLF in March 2000.⁴² The Chairman of HLF, Dr Eric Anderson, wrote to Dr Harding in April 2000 to say:

⁴¹ Heritage Lottery Fund “Evaluation of the Urban Parks Programme 1997-2002”, 2 November 2001

⁴²For example see Harding, S (2000) “Towards a Renaissance in Urban Parks”. *Cultural Trends* 35, pp 4-20. London: Policy Studies Institute; Harding, S (2001) “Urban parks: the burden of history” *The National Trust Gardens Conference Proceedings* pp 28-30; Harding, S (2001) “Public parks research” *Iffra Bulletin* International Federation of Parks and Recreational Administration, June; Harding, S (2001) “Victorian parks are hard act to follow” *Horticulture Week*, August 2; ILAM Services Ltd and Stewart Harding (2001) “Local Authority Historic Parks in the UK” *Cultural Trends No 38* pp 45-99, London: Policy Studies Institute

The Urban Park Scheme is one of our great success stories and it owes a tremendous lot to you. You must be proud of what has been achieved: at least I hope you are since it is quite a monument to have to your name!

The influence of the UPP also made itself felt through the activities of external agencies involved in the Programme, especially English Heritage in its advisory and monitoring roles; private sector consultancies involved in expert advice, monitoring and producing restoration plans; professional and voluntary bodies like ILAM and the Urban Parks Forum in working closely on research projects; the Garden History Society, Landscape Design Journal and Horticulture Week in giving positive publicity to the Programme and the projects it funded.

6.2 The impact of the UPP

Speaking at the national conference - *The Future of Historic Parks* (Nov 2001) – *Who Cares?*⁴³ - Liz Forgan, the Chairman of HLF, said:

*We are proud of our commitment to the regeneration of this important part of our UK heritage. We are proud of what has already been achieved in partnership with local authorities through this investment, which has brought people back to enjoy their parks. Without this innovative investment from HLF ... **we firmly believe there would have been no Select Committee on public parks in 1999, no recognition of parks in the Urban White Paper 2000, no Minister appointed or Green Space Task Force in 2001, and we would not have the support for parks we see here today.***

This analysis of the impact of the UPP was accepted without demur by the Conference and seems to be a reasonable assessment in the light of what followed. It is widely accepted that the unprecedented injection of funds made available through the UPP provided the impetus to focus political attention on the topic, at both national and local levels. Grants made through the UPP also brought with them certain duties on successful applicants which have encouraged local authorities to review their parks services. These included requirements to:

- Produce, in conjunction with experienced specialist consultants, restoration and development masterplans for individual parks
- Secure political support for partnership funding at the local level, usually 25% of overall project costs averaging £1.8 million
- Have, or be working towards, a district-wide parks strategy
- Engage the local community in consultation and encourage participation through Friends' Groups
- Define, and pledge to fund, enhanced future maintenance including the employment of dedicated park managers, head gardeners and rangers
- Ensure that the way parks are managed meet the needs of the public

The following section of this report seeks to track and analyse the influence of the UPP on the development of national policy and activity in the promotion of parks and open spaces.

⁴³ Forgan, L (2001) "The Heritage Lottery Fund Urban Parks Programme – The Lessons Learnt" speech at English Heritage conference *The Future of Historic Parks – Who Cares?*, 15 November 2001 at Local Government Association, London

6.3 The impact of the UPP on HLF policy and practice

Since its inception, the HLF has shown itself to be much more than a grant-giving organisation. The substantial funds available to it ensured that it would have to occupy a strategic role in influencing policies on the conservation and public appreciation and enjoyment of the nation's heritage. As such, it is instructive to record the pioneering efforts of the UPP in meeting the needs of the parks sector, and how these key policies and practices have found themselves absorbed into the mainstream HLF approach, as gauged from the current Strategic Plan 2002-2007 *Broadening the Horizons of Heritage*.⁴⁴ The following list shows key elements of a broader approach to heritage which were initially introduced in the UPP. Page numbers in brackets refer to the Strategic Plan.

- Guidance on how to write maintenance plans (5, 24)
- Targeting of deprived areas (5, 26)
- Merging capital and revenue grants (5, 26)
- Lengthening the maximum period of revenue support from three to five years (6, 27)
- Comprehensive and costed assessment of heritage needs (12)
- Giving equal attention to undesignated local as well as designated national heritage (16, 24)
- Encouraging community involvement (16)
- Contributing to urban regeneration (21)
- Staff training in the needs of the heritage (26)
- Use of Project Planning Grants – pioneered by UPP as restoration plan grants (29)

In addition to the above, the UPP had marked success in helping HLF to meet Government's Policy Directions in these areas:

- Achieving an equitable spread of grants – for many places with few heritage assets, parks provided the best opportunity for an HLF grant
- Impact on ethnic communities due to the inclusive nature of urban parks and specific design changes to accommodate ethnic populations
- Provision for children and young people through park restoration generally and playgrounds, paddling pools and informal play and sport facilities

6.4 HLF - The Public Parks Initiative (2002 - 2007)

The importance of the UPP to HLF has been demonstrated by its continuing commitment to the restoration of public parks by the indicative allocation of a further £250 million to a new programme, called the Public Parks Initiative, in the Fund's new strategic plan. Although some grants were made to country parks under the UPP, this new initiative explicitly recognises support for both rural and urban parks. The main thrust of the Public Parks Initiative will remain the same as in the Urban Parks Programme but there are some noteworthy developments:

⁴⁴ Heritage Lottery Fund (2002) *Broadening the Horizons of Heritage - The Heritage Lottery Fund Strategic Plan 2002-2007* London: Heritage Lottery Fund

- From late 2002 there will be a new dedicated application pack for parks
- More pre-application support available from regionally based staff
- Initial grants for a wider range of survey and research, including conservation management plans, access plans and audience development through new Project Planning Grants, to assist applicants in preparing main outline (stage 1) bids
- Applicants seeking grants between £50,000 and £1 million will need to supply only 10% of project costs as partnership funding

Applications will be welcomed for:

- Public parks, gardens, squares
- Historic cemeteries
- Whole park projects or single or associated park items (bandstands, statuary, lakes etc)
- Sites large and small, in town or country
- Park activities which develop new audiences – volunteers, friends' groups, learning, access
- Training in park management and related skills

Sites do not have to have *national* heritage recognition (eg English Heritage *Register*) but must be designed for the purpose and be of heritage value to the local community.

6.5 The Urban Parks Forum

At the national scale, the UPP led directly to the establishment of the Urban Parks Forum, a national body committed to the promotion of parks and open spaces and the gathering and exchange of best practice in the field. Membership gives access to the latest ideas from home and abroad and examples of best practice in design, management and community involvement. A resource library is being created to include Park Strategies, Best Value Reviews and Local Area Plans.

In 2001, the Urban Parks Forum secured major funding from the Department of Local Government and the Regions (DTLR), now the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), and is now firmly established and set to play an influential role not only with practitioners but also with Government. HLF has funded the Urban Parks Forum to carry out the Community Networking Project which will produce a register of Friends' Groups and develop links between communities and parks. The Countryside Agency has also commissioned the Forum to carry out research connected to its Country Parks Renaissance initiative.

In its Annual Report 2001/02,⁴⁵ the Chief Executive of the Urban Parks Forum says:

It should not be forgotten that without the Urban Parks Programme, which has been running since 1996, there would probably not have been a renaissance of urban parks.

⁴⁵ Urban Parks Forum (2002) *Annual Report 2001/02* Caversham: Urban Parks Forum

6.6 The Urban Taskforce (1999)

The Urban Taskforce report, *Towards an Urban Renaissance*, made no direct reference to the Urban Parks Programme and indeed much of its text seemed to be written from an architectural perspective (referring to green spaces as the “glue between buildings”).⁴⁶ However, it seems arguable that it would not have shown such awareness of the role of urban parks and greenspace in the public realm (one of its earliest colour images is of Hyde Park with the statement “the great metropolitan parks are part of our urban legacy and must be protected, enhanced and augmented”) if the HLF had not done so much to raise awareness of them since 1996.

6.7 The Urban White Paper (2000)

Although its formal response to the Select Committee report was guarded, the Government responded positively to much of the report through the Urban White Paper *Our towns and cities: the future*⁴⁷ which set out its intentions in addressing the issues raised. In Chapter 4 *Looking after the urban environment better* the White Paper says:

Access to green spaces reduces stress and promotes well-being. Parks and open spaces are among the most valued features of the places people live The Government also agrees with the ... Select Committee report last year into urban parks which called for action to reverse the decline in our parks and open spaces.

The Government listed some of the benefits that well-managed public open spaces can bring, saying that they:

- Improve the attractiveness of urban areas
- Help promote a healthier lifestyle
- Bring benefits for wildlife and the environment
- Act as an important educational tool
- Are vital to enhancing the quality of urban environments and the quality of our lives

The White Paper says that Government will take action in three key areas:

- Lead and develop a shared vision for the future of our parks, play areas and open spaces
- Improve information on the quality and quantity of parks and open spaces, and the way in which they are used and maintained
- Improve the way we plan and design new parks, play areas and public spaces, and the way we manage and maintain existing ones

The second key area was already being addressed by the funding partnership between HLF, EH and DTLR for the parks needs assessment work referred to in section 5.1.

⁴⁶ Urban Task Force (1999), *Towards an Urban Renaissance: final report of the Urban Task Force chaired by Lord Rogers of Riverside*, p.57.

⁴⁷ Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (2000) *Our Towns and Cities: the future* London: The Stationery Office

The most significant initiatives to arise from the Government's pledges were the setting up of the ministerial Urban Green Spaces Task Force to explore the subject in greater detail and to make recommendations for sustainable improvement. The influence of the UPP on the Department's deliberations was provided by the appointment to the Task Force of Alan Barber and the inclusion in different working groups of Lorna McRobie, David Lambert and Stewart Harding, all of whom played key roles in the UPP. The Task Force reported in May 2002 and the Government's response is expected in October 2002.

6.8 The Urban Green Spaces Taskforce

The Task Force set up six working groups to investigate and report on:

- Different people's needs
- Good practice
- The information base
- Planning, management and maintenance of green spaces
- Partnership working
- Resources

Each working party produced a separate report, the findings of which were considered by DTLR and combined into the Task Force final report, *Green Spaces, Better Places*.⁴⁸ This was launched by Sally Keeble MP, the Parks Minister in May 2002 at Mile End Park, East London. In her foreword she says:

Parks and green spaces should be at the centre of the renaissance of our towns and cities

Green Spaces, Better Places is an important document in setting the framework for the role of public parks, gardens and open spaces in urban regeneration and contains some 50 recommendations for action. It should help park managing authorities to understand the importance Government attaches to high quality open space and its agenda for its improvement. The key message concerns **Urban renaissance and regeneration** and says:

The provision of good quality green spaces can make an important contribution to regeneration and renewal projects, and enhance the image of a neighbourhood, or whole town. Parks are an essential element in creating a sense of place, which is an attractive place for people to live and for business to locate. The potential of parks and green spaces in enhancing and contributing to the changing economies of towns and cities should therefore underpin regeneration programmes.

The key recommendations (abbreviated) of the Taskforce were:

- A new national agency for urban green spaces (steering group to be set up immediately)

⁴⁸ Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (2001) *Green Spaces, Better Places – Interim report of The Urban Green Spaces Task Force* London: The Stationery Office

- Additional capital funding of £100m per annum to be made available, initially for five years, to be provided in part by the New Opportunities Fund.
- Introduce a funding and management scheme for urban parks and green spaces, similar to the Countryside Stewardship scheme
- Increase funding for parks from any revised Landfill Tax Credit Scheme
- Allow local authorities to use developer's contributions from s106 agreements to provide additional resources for green spaces
- Increase EPCS block of Standard Spending Assessment and create "public spaces" sub-block
- Identify a national Best Value indicator to monitor training provision in local green space management
- Promote greater private sector involvement in parks and open spaces by guiding on the roles of Private Finance Initiatives, town centre management and Business Improvement Districts
- Promote the inclusion of parks and green spaces across public policy priorities: regeneration and neighbourhood renewal; regional development; planning and housing; culture, play and sport
- Establish national quality standards for managing parks and green spaces based on the Green Flag Award scheme

The following recommendations were directed to local government (and the LGA):

- The Government and local authorities working through local strategic partnerships should make it a priority to provide high quality parks and green spaces to serve the needs of people in disadvantaged areas. This objective should be at the heart of regeneration and neighbourhood renewal programmes
- The proposed single list of national priorities for local government should include improvement to the environment and public space – local authorities should make parks and green spaces priorities in their local Public Service Agreements
- Local authorities should involve communities and partnerships in green space service planning and delivery and this should be underpinned by local Community Strategies, Best Value reviews and performance indicators
- Local authorities should explore the potential of open space trusts as an option for delivering improvements
- Local authorities should provide effective leadership for local parks and green spaces at the highest level within the council by clearly designating a senior cabinet member to champion and promote parks and green spaces
- Local authorities should develop or update a green space strategy which integrates with neighbourhood renewal, regeneration, planning and housing development, community development, local health improvement, and culture, play and sports strategies
- Design reviews should be carried out for failing spaces
- Local authorities should prepare a management plan for every major park and groups of smaller spaces and other types of space (eg cemeteries, allotments, nature reserves, woodlands).

Although the Task Force relied heavily on the HLF sponsored Public Park Assessment in compiling its report, and was happy to use photographs of successful UPP projects, it has to said

that scant acknowledgement is made of HLF's pioneering role. This was commented on in *Landscape Design* June 2002.

6.9 The *Public Park Assessment* (2001)

Many of the Task Force recommendations were based on the findings of the UPP-led research into the condition of parks at the national level. This has now been published by the Urban Parks Forum which continues to add to the national database created. The Public Park Assessment has been of immense value in providing hard data at the national scale to support the hitherto isolated opinions of local authority officers and commentators, and for use in media features.

6.10 Planning Policy Guidance Note No 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation, 2002

In 2001, the Government's draft revision of the 1991 PPG 17, *Sport, Open Space and Recreation*, was greeted with widespread criticism during public consultation, culminating in the House of Commons Urban Affairs Sub-Committee holding an inquiry into the draft.⁴⁹

The Select Committee recommended that in revising PPG17 Government needed to:

- Recognise the fundamental importance, over and above sport and recreation, of open space, to the Government's wider objectives for the urban renaissance and the quality of life
- Emphasise the link between planning and management of open space; management may not be a planning issue but sustainability is, and unless planning takes into account the need to achieve good quality maintenance for new and existing open space, the contribution which open space can make to towns and cities is severely reduced
- Indicate the overriding importance of existing spaces and their quality to the urban environment; the need to enhance them and the role of the planning system in achieving this
- Indicate that new open spaces and facilities should not be created unless there has been an assessment of local need and unless there are the funds now and in the future to maintain them
- Give clear guidance on how planning obligations can be used to bring about the enhancement of existing open space
- Include a requirement that local authorities prepare open space strategies
- Give much clearer guidance in accompanying process guidance on what should be addressed in an open spaces strategy, including the assessment of needs for open spaces, sport and recreational facilities, guidance on typologies, networks and hierarchies, standards and community participation

⁴⁹ House of Commons Transport, Local Government and the Regions Committee, third report, session 2001-02, *Public Spaces: the role of PPG17 in the urban renaissance*, 3 vols., HC-238-I-III, February 2002.

- Acknowledge in its accompanying Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment the resource implication for local authorities in fulfilling the role which we and the Government expect them to play.

The published version of the new PPG came out in July 2002 with significant changes, not least its title which put open space in its rightful place. Throughout the new PPG there is a welcome emphasis on the contribution of open space to quality of life and extends the original's definition to a typology which includes urban parks.⁵⁰ The PPG also stresses the importance of local authorities' undertaking assessments of existing provision of and need for open space, and for the first time emphasises that this be on a qualitative as well as quantitative basis.⁵¹ It also advises that local authorities should prepare strategies for open space, sport and recreation tied into the Community Strategy.⁵² It proposes too that open space and sport and recreational facilities "that are of high quality or of particular value to a local community" should be protected in development plans.⁵³ And it contains a useful reminder on enhancing existing open spaces – "where recreational land and facilities are of poor quality or under-used, this should not be taken as necessarily indicating an absence of need in the area."⁵⁴

The accompanying process guidance, *Assessing Needs and Opportunities: a companion guide to PPG17*, was published in September 2002. It gives detailed advice on local assessments and audits, the setting and application of provision standards; and an open space typology which includes two paragraphs on urban parks and gardens. Oddly, instead of flagging up the number of historic urban parks as an open space resource, it refers to creating new parks as a good use for contaminated brownfield sites. However, the second paragraph does stress the need to seek improvements to poor accessibility or quality in existing sites.⁵⁵

6.11 The Local Government Association

The Local Government Association (LGA) too was spurred into action by the Select Committee report *Town and Country Parks*. It set up the Parks and Open Spaces Advisory Panel (POSP) and published, jointly with the Countryside Agency, *The value of parks and open spaces – social inclusion and community regeneration (2001)*.⁵⁶ This report says:

Investing in the restoration and management of our parks and open spaces is an investment in tackling social inclusion, education, crime and disorder and community regeneration. [p21]

⁵⁰ Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (July 2002), *Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation*, Annex: Definitions.

⁵¹ PPG17, para.3.

⁵² *ibid.* para.4.

⁵³ *ibid.* para.11.

⁵⁴ *ibid.* para.18.

⁵⁵ Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (September 2002), *Assessing Needs and Opportunities: a companion guide to PPG17*, Annex A, paras. A2 – A3.

⁵⁶ Local Government Association (2001) *The value of parks and open spaces – social inclusion and community regeneration*. London: LGA Publications

In order to fully grasp this opportunity, the report identifies the key challenges ahead, and recommends the following actions at the local level:

- Local councils should seek to integrate dedicated plans for parks and open spaces into their cultural and community strategies
- It is essential that, as part of their Best Value process, local councils collate and maintain information relating to this planning, such as usage/visitor breakdowns and purpose of visits
- Collect and monitor evidence where possible of the impact of parks on local regeneration, health, education and inclusion (in particular the impact of external funding on local parks projects)
- As part of their Best Value review, local councils should include training and development opportunities within the sustainable management of parks and open spaces
- Promote the value of parks and open spaces across local council departments and corporate plans to contribute to education, health improvement programmes, social inclusion and economic development [p21]

6.12 English Heritage

English Heritage held a seminar on the restoration of urban parks shortly after the launch of the Urban Parks Programme on 24 October 1997, which helped to galvanise local authority interest in the UPP. The English Heritage initiative to improve London Squares⁵⁷ of the 1990s encouraged and helped many London Boroughs to make grant applications to the UPP. From the outset, English Heritage staff, under then Director of Gardens and Landscape, Lorna McRobie, were closely involved in writing assessment reports on UPP applications and subsequently in monitoring. At the same time English Heritage was, in response to external demands, increasing the number of public parks on the *Register of parks and gardens of special historic interest in England*. Criticism in the Select Committee report on Town and Country Parks spurred still further efforts by English Heritage to reflect the new awareness of urban parks. The report of the Historic Environment Review Steering Group, *Power of Place*,⁵⁸ gave prominence to urban parks, featuring a case study of the HLF supported restoration of Ward Jackson Park, Hartlepool. *Power of Place* recommended (Recommendation 3) that the Government

Commission a full review of the management and maintenance of public parks.

There is little doubt that the symbiotic relationship between HLF and English Heritage has contributed to the latter's increased interest in urban parks.

The Government's response to *Power of Place* came in the report, *The Historic Environment: a force for our future*.⁵⁹ Although the report's emphasis on the past that is "all around us" (para.1), on the urban environment, on liveability and access, perhaps make it inevitable, the section on historic parks, gardens and open spaces (paras. 4.30-34) is still remarkable in focusing almost entirely on

⁵⁷ This initiative resulted in a publication, English Heritage (2000) *A campaign for London Squares* London: English Heritage

⁵⁸ English Heritage (2000) *Power of Place* London: English Heritage

⁵⁹ Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (December 2001), *The Historic Environment: a force for our future*.

urban parks and ignoring traditional heritage landscapes. The report's recognition of the value of urban parks and open spaces marks the progress made in lifting them up the political agenda since the inception of the Urban Parks Programme:

High-quality public spaces are central to the Government's "liveability" agenda which is itself at the heart of one of the cross-cutting reviews in the 2002 Spending Review. Public spaces create the basis for the buildings in our towns and cities; they are the syntax that articulates our streets. As much as buildings it is open spaces that define our environment and shape the landscape of our surroundings. But more than that they help to determine the quality of life in urban areas; they constitute urban lungs in which people congregate and spend time. Often these spaces are identifiable symbols of the town or city itself and maintaining them to high standards not only reflects the confidence with which the community sees itself but can be effective springboards for more widespread regeneration and urban renaissance.⁶⁰

The report also pays tribute to the work of the HLF:

Many public parks and open spaces are historic places but these are often in need of major refurbishment. Progress has been made, principally as a result of the Heritage Lottery Fund's Urban Parks Programme.⁶¹

6.13 Country Parks

The establishment of Country Parks was enabled by The Countryside Act (1968). Since then some 250 Country Parks have been established and approved for designation by the Countryside Commission (now Countryside Agency). The *Public Parks Assessment*⁶² showed that, of a sample of 108 Country Parks, 33% were described as being in good condition, 57% as fair and 10% as poor, with 44% improving, 30% staying the same and 26% declining. The data show that Country Parks are in slightly better condition than urban parks and that a greater proportion is improving. However, data collected on the condition of individual features within Country Parks show a disproportionately high rate of loss of historic features and infrastructure. The report analyses this contradiction as follows:

With many of their most important historic features showing just as great, or sometimes even greater rates of loss, it is harder to see why the assessment of trend in condition is so much better than for all historic parks. Discussions with country park managers during the course of the study indicated that improvement to the environmental or ecological value of their sites were a high priority to them; it is perhaps the successes they are achieving in this area that prompted the relatively good assessments of trend in condition, whereas the historic landscape and its features were in significant decline. [Ch 4, 26]

In 2000 The Countryside Agency committed itself to bringing about a renaissance of Country Parks. Consequently it set up the Country Parks Renaissance Advisory Panel (CPRAP) to advise and steer a programme of further research leading to the publication of a report in 2003, and a programme of applications to HLF for restoration funding. HLF's experience gained through the UPP leaves it well placed to support the Agency's initiative.

⁶⁰ DCMS, DTLR (2001), *The Historic Environment: a force for our future*, para.4.30.

⁶¹ *ibid*, para.4.31.

⁶² Urban Parks Forum (2001) *Public Parks Assessment* Caversham: Urban Parks Forum

6.14 Cemeteries

Under the Urban Parks Programme, the HLF grant-aided restoration projects in a number of historic cemeteries, including Whitstable Road Jewish Cemetery in Canterbury; Nunhead Cemetery, Greater London; Highgate Cemetery, Sheffield General Cemetery, Arno's Vale Cemetery, Bristol, West Hampstead Cemetery and Birmingham Cathedral Churchyard. This was helpful when the House of Commons Environment Select Committee decided in 2000 to hold an inquiry into the subject of cemeteries. HLF gave evidence to the inquiry and was able to report that it had at that time grant-aided some twelve projects to a total value of some £3.35m. The Select Committee report noted that the HLF "displayed an encouraging attitude towards the funding of projects involving cemeteries, despite the relatively little which has been spent on them: they told us that the low levels of funding for cemetery projects reflected a low number of applications."⁶³ The HLF has since promoted its funding of historic cemeteries in Heritage Lottery Fund News, Summer 2001, Issue no. 18, "The place to track down all sorts of ancestors", and in the last year has committed another million pounds on cemetery projects, with several million-plus schemes currently being processed. As a result of the Select Committee inquiry, English Heritage has also targetted cemeteries and is pursuing an active programme of assessing them for inclusion on the Register, with a rise from 25 to 74 registered cemeteries since the inquiry.

6.15 The Role of Parks and Open Spaces in Cultural Strategies

The DCMS guidelines⁶⁴ for producing a Cultural Strategy define, under "Scope of Culture", ten "material dimensions", the following six of which relate directly to the contribution parks and open spaces can make to the quality of life:

- The built heritage, architecture, landscape and archaeology
- Sports events, facilities and development
- Parks, open spaces, wildlife habitats, water environment and countryside recreation
- Children's play, playgrounds and play activities
- Tourism, festivals and attractions
- Informal leisure pursuits

DCMS also define five "value dimensions", all of which have relevance to the enjoyment of parks and open spaces by the public:

- Relationships
- Shared memories, experiences and identity
- Diverse cultural, religious and historic backgrounds
- Standards

⁶³ House of Commons Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee, eighth report, session 2000-01, *Cemeteries*, 2 vols., HC-91-I-II, March 2001, vol.I p.xxxi.

⁶⁴ Department of Culture, Media and Sport (2000) *Guidance for Local Authorities in England on Local Cultural Strategies* London: The Stationery Office

- What we consider valuable to pass on to future generations

It can be seen from the above definitions that public parks, gardens and open spaces are now seen to have an essential role to play in an effective Local Cultural Strategy. Early examples of these strategies show great variation in the importance attached to open space, but preparing them involves local authorities engaging with local communities and responding to their concerns, giving a platform for parks issues.

6.15 New Opportunities Fund – Green Spaces and Sustainable Communities (2001)⁶⁵

Although the report of the DCMS Select Committee *Heritage Lottery Fund* recommended that NOF and HLF work together on parks and open spaces, joint-working was not pursued seriously by either of the lottery distributors. The NOF scheme provides a £125 million budget (UK wide) for a three-year programme (2001-04) of grants from £5,000 to £50,000, to be distributed by various award-partners, including the Countryside Agency (Doorstep Greens), BTCV (People's Places), Barnado's (Better Play), English Nature (Wildspace), RSNC (SEED), Sport England and Sustrans (Green Routes & Safe Routes). Even if the NOF Programme was developed explicitly to complement the work of the UPP, the partnership arrangements and the deliberately small scale of individual awards appear to have limited its impact. Disappointingly, the second 3-year environment initiative, £159m for "Transforming Communities" allocates significantly less to urban green spaces. Although an overall increase on the £125m of the first initiative, the definition of "environment" has been stretched; and the line between environmental spending and "community" spending blurred. £10m is earmarked for "community drugs rehabilitation"; £50m for development of sources of renewable electricity generation; and of the remaining £99m half is to be spent on "community waste projects". This leaves less than £50m over three years for anything like green space: in fact this relatively small amount is to cover not just green space, but all open space, cycle routes, community buildings and local heritage projects.

The difference in character between the HLF and NOF scheme marked a divergence of priorities in the regeneration of open space which re-emerged in the report of the Urban Green Spaces Task Force. Traditional parks seem to have become the preserve of the heritage agencies, while the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister seems to concern itself with the broader context of urban greenspace provision.

7.0 An overview of the influence of the UPP

It is apparent that, through the UPP, the HLF became *de facto* the lead agency on urban parks if not on historic parks and gardens generally: English Heritage by comparison has never issued any kind of policy or practice advice on public parks. The cash-value put on urban parks by the HLF forced decision-makers to consider the other kinds of value which parks represented - economic regeneration, social inclusion, sustainability, biodiversity, community health, crime-reduction, transport and we are just beginning to see the percolation of parks policy into these

⁶⁵ See New opportunities Fund (Undated) *An introduction to Green Spaces and Sustainable Communities*

other areas. It is unlikely that the House of Commons Environment Select Committee would have called an inquiry into town and country parks in 1999 if the UPP had not been set up and, in essence, demonstrated the importance of parks. Similarly the HLF was asked to give evidence to the same Committee's inquiry in 2000 on cemeteries, having grant-aided several under the Urban Parks Programme.

7.1 Restoration plans

Best practice was imported from the experience of the Countryside Commission (Task Force Trees) and English Heritage in storm-damage grants (1987-1996), in particular the use of grants for surveys and restoration plans, separate from grants for capital programmes. The use of small grants for the production of restoration plans has proved a cost-effective (about 1% of total grant awards) way of ensuring good quality applications for the main repairs; the use of experienced consultants helped to redevelop local expertise which had significantly declined over the previous twenty years. Best practice as refined by the UPP in this area is documented in detail in *The Regeneration of Public Parks* (2000).⁶⁶

In particular the UPP established, within the favourable framework set out in the HLF Annual Reports,⁶⁷ and afforded by the Secretary of State's Directions and the encouragement of Lord Rothschild and Dame Jennifer Jenkins, several pioneering initiatives. Two are worth special mention for their far-reaching influence on conservation philosophy.

7.2 National and local importance

First, that any national "lists" were not the sole or main criterion for judging heritage merit. Indeed in the scoring system developed for the first round of grants, local heritage merit scored the same as national heritage merit. This was partly because of the paucity of those national lists (the English Heritage *Register* included at that time less than a hundred urban parks; the Scottish *Inventory* had none), but also partly because of the HLF's policy imperatives of addressing under-represented heritage areas, geographical spread and public benefit. Top-down lists were seen as unrepresentative and to not recognise adequately the value local people put on their own parks. A park might never make the national list but could still contribute uniquely to a town or city's heritage and environment, and the quality of people's lives.

Recently, epitomised by English Heritage's 2000 report, *Power of Place*, we have seen the whole notion of top-down assessment of historic importance questioned and re-valued. From the start, the UPP put national lists to one side and instead gave the initiative to applicants to demonstrate heritage merit themselves, from their local perspective.

This ground-breaking approach had problems: there was certainly some initial resistance from inside and outside the HLF to the notion that such parks were heritage at all. As the Director of

⁶⁶ Lockwood, M (2000) "Study Methods" in Woudstra, J & Fieldhouse, K (eds) *The Regeneration of Public Parks* London: E&FN Spon

⁶⁷ Heritage Lottery Fund (1995) *Annual Report 1994-95*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund
Heritage Lottery Fund (1996) *Annual Report 1995-96*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund

the Eden Project, Tim Smit (2001), so memorably noted,⁶⁸ the HLF initially “approached urban parks like a duchess in fear of meeting a wino in a dark alley”. The early days of the UPP were an act of faith on the part of the Chairman, Lord Rothschild. In this, the academic respectability conferred on these sites by Dr Conway's book and by the Garden History Society's lobbying was influential. And because the HLF was not able to solicit applications and thus organise a logical sequence of park schemes, having instead to take each application as it came, it was open to some scepticism from more conventional conservation bodies: Birkenhead Park for example, the only Grade I registered urban park, did not receive HLF support until 2000, while substantial grants were going in the interim to parks which were generally considered "minor". But the HLF stuck to its principles, and the "portfolio" has looked ever more representative of the tremendous variety of public parks in the UK with each year that passed.

7.3 Restoration and regeneration

The second initiative worth mentioning was based on recognising that the aim of the HLF, as stated in the 1995 Annual Report, the "regeneration" of parks, could not be achieved solely by repair or even restoration. Regeneration was wider and more comprehensive than that and was territory into which grants for heritage landscapes, and heritage generally, had not ventured. Public parks depend on use, and attracting users back into parks was the litmus test for success. Repair of the historic fabric alone would not necessarily deliver that; moreover unless the underlying causes of the dereliction were addressed the investment was all too likely to be rapidly undone by lack of maintenance or by vandalism.

Consequently the UPP puts capital money not only into repair, but into new features such as toilets, cafes, new garden and play areas. It also put money into new staff posts, from park-keepers and rangers to park-managers. And it required adherence to an agreed ten-year management plan for the upkeep of the repaired park. Then by allowing applicants to capitalise and count as partnership funding all increased maintenance-spending, it encouraged Councils to invest, and the value of that money was trebled by the 25-75% partnership funding arrangements. This flexibility has made the UPP especially attractive to professionals who knew that the heritage element, while critical to a park's character, was not its be-all and end-all.

7.4 Putting the clock back?

While of course this innovation could not have been achieved without the HLF's enormous resources, it also depended on the organisation's openness to new ways of thinking about heritage, and perhaps it would not have been possible if the lottery money had been put in the hands of those with deeply established conservation practices, such as English Heritage.

Despite the facts of its spending - for example over £8 million on new play areas and equipment and the host of new features it has grant-aided - the HLF is dogged by misconception, probably inherent in its very name, and still gets caricatured as only being interested either in the top parks or only interested in putting things back, and by implication putting back the clock. For every

⁶⁸Smit, T (2001) “Local Authority Parks in the UK – time for action” *Cultural Trends* No 38 pp 105-07, London: Policy Studies Institute

project there does have to be a clear heritage element, but it is hard to imagine a more flexible interpretation of the notion of historic interest. It is also true that historic parks, even when the term is interpreted from a local perspective only represent some 9% of the total number of parks and open spaces nationally (some 2500 out of a total of more than 27,000), although that is 32% of the total area.

It is true too that the UPP has not funded the creation of new public parks and gardens on green- or brown-field sites. Although there is a clear popular and political demand for lottery funds for this purpose it cannot fall to the HLF: the organisation is prevented from funding these projects by its remit. That responsibility undoubtedly falls to the New Opportunities Fund, which inherited the mantle of the Millennium Fund, which did fund such projects, most notably the new Mile End Park in the East End of London. NOF spending in this area to date has been disappointing, with sports having seized the lion's share of open-space spending, but the organisation's potential remains, and its programmes of spending remain in the hands of the Secretary of State.

As for putting the clock back, the UPP's spending record, and its distinctiveness compared to the older heritage agencies, should firmly lay this ghost. Good landscape restoration plans do not put the clock back; they develop the best of what remains on the basis of sensitive historical analysis. If the clock is being put back it is no more than twenty-five years, to when parks, the sum of often over a hundred years of incremental development and change, were still well-cared for by well-resourced local authorities. Ironically, despite the protests of landscape architects and others, public consultation exercises show again and again the public's affection for historic features, and their over-arching desire for the basic provision of security and good maintenance.

7.5 Gaining in influence

All this demonstrates how a simple, reactive grant-programme grew in subtlety, effectiveness and influence. The Policy Directions issued to the HLF by the Secretary of State did not apply to the national agencies, but the influence of the HLF as it developed its policies and assessment procedures to meet these objectives has had a far-reaching effect on thinking about conservation and its place in society across the board. The UPP's benefits to the HLF in terms of public relations are incalculable, but its benefit to parks extends far beyond the individual parks which have so far benefited directly. Parks have risen up the local agenda: the district and borough-wide parks strategies encouraged by the HLF, and the principle of management plans for individual parks have had far-reaching benefit to parks. The political mileage in supporting parks has been recognised by countless local politicians. It has encouraged thousands of private individuals to form together and campaign for their parks. The HLF deserves great credit for holding its nerve as the Programme developed, and should be applauded for taking on this unforeseen and entirely admirable role. It is perhaps ironic that calls for a national agency for urban parks have been in part deflected by the fact that the HLF has been delivering so effectively in this area.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ Countryside Agency (2000) "Designed Landscapes and Country Parks" Board paper AP 00/4, 10 February .

The efforts of the last decade have now begun to pay off. The importance of urban parks has ascended to the august level of a political truism, with ministers who once brushed aside pleas for help eager to put on record their view that "our parks are, after all, one of our national glories".⁷⁰

The report of the review of the historic environment carried out by English Heritage, *Power of Place* (2000), gave prominence to urban parks as "a vital part of the historic environment", over and above the private, eighteenth-century landscape, long seen as the epitome of the heritage landscape.

Our Towns and Cities: the Future, the Government's Urban White Paper (December 2000) was clearly indebted to the Select Committee inquiry. After a disappointing formal response to the inquiry, the DETR produced three solid pages on parks and play areas. This too should be seen as a child of the Urban Parks Programme - apart from the HLF showing the only evidence of any significant "public" spending on urban parks on behalf of the Government, the report bears the imprint of the new evaluation of urban parks which has developed in the Programme's wake.

In 2001 the Prime Minister, in a keynote conference speech,⁷¹ said:

We also want to improve the quality of green spaces in our towns and cities ... Well over £160 million has so far been offered under the Urban Parks Programme for the restoration of some 300 urban parks, producing huge benefits for the local communities they serve. ... As an example of what can be achieved, a Heritage Lottery Fund for St Peter's Gardens in Wolverhampton has helped restore this prominent town-centre and enable the gardens to stay open throughout the evening.

7.6 Conclusion

The Heritage Lottery Fund's Urban Parks Programme has transformed perceptions of urban parks. The catalytic effect of the UPP in transforming political perceptions of the value and the needs of urban parks is not easily quantifiable but is evidently significant. HLF is currently evaluating the benefits of some of the park restoration projects it has supported. The UPP shouldered the unlooked-for responsibility of lead agency in this sector, and has contributed to policy-making and opinion-forming, as well as to new initiatives to plug the gap in public policy. It is to be hoped that Government will act on the recommendations of the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce and now relieve the HLF of that burden.

The UPP was a pioneering programme: its scope and the range of sites and projects were unprecedented. In effect, it defined an entirely new area of heritage; it championed places that although still loved by communities, were largely disregarded by those in power. And it has widened the constituency of heritage too, channelling funds to communities that would otherwise not have received them, and given millions more people a stake in what is termed the national heritage.

⁷⁰ House of Commons Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee, twentieth report, session 1998-99, *Town and Country Parks*, 2 vols., HC-477-I-III, October 1999, vol.III, p.96.

⁷¹ "Improving your local environment" Fairfield Hall, Croydon, 24 April 2001

8.0 Outline chronology of The Urban Parks Programme

1995/96

Summer Lord Rothschild publicly invites applications for urban parks. Four received.
Autumn Parks Advisory Panel set up.
Jan 29 Urban Parks Programme guidance leaflet published
Public launch of UPP by Lord Rothschild, Weston Park, Sheffield

1996/97

Apr 1 Stewart Harding (SH) recruited on secondment to manage UPP from HLF headquarters in St James's
Apr 3 SH addressed national ILAM conference, Kensington
Apr – July More than 400 enquiries from potential applicants
Jul First grants awarded for park restoration plans
Aug Recruitment of Mary Lockwood, first senior case officer
Sep Appointment of Mark Williamson and Ian Shaw, senior case officers, and assistant
Start of Parks Team
Production of scoring system and guidance notes for first round of bids
Meetings with consultants, English Heritage, Countryside Agency to introduce assessment process
Sep 30 186 parks applications received seeking total of £227m
Sep-Feb Scoring completed and assessment ongoing
Dec Appointment of Tim Wheatley and Tom Cromwell, two further case officers
Jan Appointment of Ray Taylor, senior case officer
Recruitment of CO and two CAs
Appointment of Parks Team secretary
Parks Team at its greatest strength
Feb 26 All trustees papers ready and mailed for Trustees Extraordinary Meeting
Feb 28 All letters sent out to applicants with bids not being presented to Trustees
Mar 4 Chairman's briefing for Extraordinary Trustees Meeting
Mar 5 **Trustees Extraordinary Meeting - 40 parks cases for approval of £58m**

1997/98

May 15 Announcement of first round grants
PR events all round country and extensive press coverage
May UPP budget for 1997/98 set at £75m
Jun First Landscape Heritage Trust meeting with Lord Rothschild
Jun 25 Ray Taylor addresses ILAM conference
Jun 26 **Briefing paper to applicants "Historic Landscape Survey and Restoration Management Plan"**
June 27 Parks Team audited
Aug 26 HLF relocate headquarters to Sloane Sq
SH takes up new role as Policy Adviser
Parks Team split into regional teams

- Oct 7 Agreed with HLF Professional Support Services to drop collateral warranties from parks project contracts
- Oct £26m reduction in parks budget from £75m to £49m for current financial year
- Nov 5 & 19 Parks Advisory Panel – objections to budget cuts and end of restoration plan funding
- Nov 25 **Trustees Meeting – Policy Paper “Urban parks - a strategic approach”**
- Jan 5 Work on guidance for park management plans
- Jan 22 **Trustees Meeting – Policy Paper “Urban parks – a strategic approach, update”**
Policy paper “The funding of options appraisals, feasibility studies, landscape restoration plans, conservation plans and development costs for capital projects”
- Mar 31 Lord Rothschild steps down as Chairman, HLF and replaced by Dr Eric Anderson.
Rosemary Ewles, Head of Policy, leaves HLF

1998/99

- Apr 23 2 stage application process introduced
- Apr 30 Training session on conservation plans, with Kate Clark
- May 18 Coram’s Fields announcement with Dr Eric Anderson and Frank Dobson MP
Other announcement events
- May 28 **Draft Policy Paper – “Proposed revised strategy for the Urban Parks Programme**
- Jun 2 **Small Grants Committee – Paper on park restoration plans**
- Aug 17 Event to mark completion of Emslie Horniman Pleasance with Chris Smith MP
- Sep 10 **Trustees Meeting – Policy Paper “Allocation of budgets”**
Trustees’ discussion of 1st HLF strategic plan
- Sep Production of and distribution of Urban Parks questionnaire
- Nov 9 Landscape Heritage Trust (LHT) steering group, Birmingham
- Nov 30 LHT consultative group
- Dec 16 LHT meeting
- Jan 26 **Trustees Meeting – Policy Paper “The Urban Parks Programme”**
- Jan 28 Report of DCMS Select Committee “Heritage Lottery Fund”
- Mar 15 SH meeting Anthea Case re UPP priority for deprived areas
- Mar 25 LHT meeting

1999/2000

- Apr 14 Meeting Alan Smith ILAM re Needs Assessment
- May 5 LHT meeting, Aberdeen
- May 12 **Urban Parks Programme – Policy abstract**
- Jun 2 LHT meeting
- Jun 8 LHT meeting re evidence to Select Committee “Town & Country Parks”
- Jun 14 Town & Country Parks, Select Committee – LHT evidence
- Jun 29 Ditto - Urban Parks Forum evidence
- Jul 6 Ditto - HLF, UPP evidence
- Jul 27 Ditto - LHT reprise

Aug 19 Write brief for Parks Needs Assessment
Oct 6 SH speaking at European Conference on public parks – Arnhem, Holland
Oct 26 **Historic Buildings and Land Panel – Policy Paper “Urban Parks Programme - Update”**
Dec 14 **Trustees Meeting – Policy Paper “Urban Parks Programme - Update”**

Jan 28 SH talk at Architectural Assoc
Feb 22 Trustees
Mar 1 **Policy statement on Urban Parks and Designed Landscapes**
Mar 14 Town & Country Parks Select Committee – LGA, NOF, EH
Mar 30 SH leaves HLF
Lorna McRobie appointed policy advisor on Landscape and Natural Heritage

2000/01

Apr 11 Local Government Association (LGA) Parks and Open Spaces Panel
May 17 Meeting with ILAM re Needs Assessment report
Jun 2 Launch of “The Regeneration of Public Parks”
Jul 12 Meeting at DTLR re Parks Needs Assessment
Oct 17 **Trustees Meeting - Policy Paper “Public Parks: Review of Urban Parks Programme”**
Oct 31 HLF seminar – Monitoring and evaluating UPP projects
Nov 8 Start-up meeting stage 2 Parks Assessment
Feb 5 1st meeting of Urban Green Spaces Task Force
Mar 3 SH writes leaflet – “Restoring historic public parks” for National Urban Forestry Unit
Mar 6 SH speaks at LGA conference, Scarborough – Parks Assessment

2001/02

Apr 30 SH addresses National Trust Gardens Conference, Bath on subject of UPP
May 4 SH on Radio 4 You and Yours re Parks Assessment
Jun 9 SH GHS conference speech Getting it together re UPP
Jun 21 HLF launch “Your Heritage” grant scheme
Jun HLF consultation period “The Horizons of Heritage”
Jun 26 SH addresses UpFor Conference, Leeds – “Tipping the Balance”
Aug 23 Press release Policy Studies Inst – Cultural Trends parks piece
Broadcast, Radio 4, ITV, local radio stations
Sep 10 Launch of LGA parks publication “The Value of Public Parks”
Sep 25 SH addresses UpFor AGM on UPP, Needs Assessment
Nov 15 English Heritage conference on public parks

9.0 Bibliography

9.1 Published sources

Alford, A (1991) "Parks – It's all in the Strategy". *Horticulture Week*, 20 September

Askwith, C (2000) "The Economic Contribution of Historic Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes: a review of existing data and research and recommendations for future research" *Cultural Trends* 35. London: Policy Studies Institute

Barber, A (1991) *A Guide to Management Plans for Parks and Open Spaces*. Basildon: Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management

Comedia and Demos (1995) *Park Life: Urban Parks and Social Renewal*. London: Comedia and Demos

Conway, H (1996) *Public Parks*. Princes Risborough: Shire

Conway, H (1991) *People's Parks: The Design and Development of Victorian Parks in Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Conway, H and Lambert, D (1993) *Public Prospects: Historic Urban Parks under Threat*. London: The Garden History Society and the Victorian Society

Department of Culture, Media and Sport (2000) *Guidance for Local Authorities in England on Local Cultural Strategies*. London: The Stationery Office

Department of the Environment (1996) *Greening the City* London: The Stationery Office

Department of the Environment (1996) *People, Parks and Cities*. London: The Stationery Office

Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (2000) *Our towns and cities: the Future* London: The Stationery Office

Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (2001) *Green Spaces, Better Places – Interim report of The Urban Green Spaces Task Force* London: The Stationery Office

Fieldhouse, K (1999) "The wind of change" *Landscape Design* 278, pp 22-24

GMB (Undated, 1993) *Grounds for Concern*. London: GMB

GMB (Undated, 1996) *More Grounds for Concern*. London: GMB

Harding, S (1996) "The Urban Parks Programme of the Heritage Lottery Fund" *Garden History Society Newsletter* No 47

Harding, S (1997) "Heritage Lottery Mania" *Landscape Design* 258, March

Harding, S (1998) "The Heritage Lottery Fund" *London Cemeteries and Churchyards* Conference proceedings, London: London Historic Parks and Gardens Trust

Harding, S (1998) "The Urban Parks Programme" Funding London's Heritage Landscapes, conference proceedings 24 October 1997, London: London Historic Parks and Gardens Trust

Harding, S (2000) "Towards a Renaissance in Urban Parks". *Cultural Trends* 35, pp 4-20. London: Policy Studies Institute

Harding, S (2001) "Urban parks: the burden of history" *The National Trust Gardens Conference Proceedings* pp 28-30

Harding, S (2001) "Public parks research" *Ippra Bulletin* International Federation of Parks and Recreational Administration, June

Harding, S (2001) "Victorian parks are hard act to follow" *Horticulture Week*, August 2

Heritage Lottery Fund (1995) *Annual Report 1994-95*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund

Heritage Lottery Fund (1996) *Annual Report 1995-96*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund

Heritage Lottery Fund (Undated, 1996) *The Urban Parks Programme*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund

Heritage Lottery Fund (1998) *Towards a Strategic Plan for Lottery Funding for the Heritage* London: Heritage Lottery Fund

Heritage Lottery Fund (1999) *Strategic Plan 1999-2002* London: Heritage Lottery Fund

Heritage Lottery Fund (2002) *Broadening the Horizons of Heritage - The Heritage Lottery Fund Strategic Plan 2002-2007* London: Heritage Lottery Fund

House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee (1999) *The Heritage Lottery Fund* London: The Stationery Office

House of Commons Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee (1999) *Town and Country Parks*, 3 vols. London: The Stationery Office

ILAM Services Ltd and Stewart Harding (2001) "Local Authority Historic Parks in the UK" *Cultural Trends No 38* pp 45-99, London: Policy Studies Institute

Jenkins, J (1999) "Reversing the downward spiral of neglect" *Landscape Design* 278, pp 20-21

Jenkins, J (2001) "Public Parks after the Urban White Paper" *Cultural Trends No 38* pp 101-04, London: Policy Studies Institute

Jordan, H. (1994) "Public Parks, 1885-1914". *Garden History*, volume 22, no1. London: Garden History Society

Lambert, D (2000) "Politics and parks: renaissance and inertia" *Cultural Trends* 35, pp 21-26
London: Policy Studies Institute

Landscape Design (2002) "Urban Green Spaces Taskforce's final report", June pp 6-7

Local Government Association (2001) *The value of parks and open spaces – social inclusion and community regeneration*. London: LGA Publications

Lockwood, M (2000) "Study Methods" in Woudstra, J & Fieldhouse, K (eds) *The Regeneration of Public Parks* London: E&FN Spon

Marshall, T (1999) "Maintaining momentum" *Landscape Design* 278, pp 27-28

Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions (2000) *The Government's Response to the Twentieth Report from the House of Commons Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee – Report on Town and Country Parks*. London: The Stationery Office

Smit, T (2001) "Local Authority Parks in the UK – time for action" *Cultural Trends No 38* pp 105-07, London: Policy Studies Institute

Taylor, H (1995) "Urban Public Parks, 1840-1900: Design and Meaning" *Garden History* 23, 2 pp 201-21 London: Garden History Society

Taylor, H (2000) "Notes on the History of Public Parks" *Cultural Trends* 35, pp 81-86
London: Policy Studies Institute

Urban Parks Forum (2001) *Public Parks Assessment – Report to Heritage Lottery Fund; Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions; English Heritage; Countryside Agency*. Caversham: Urban Parks Forum

Urban Parks Forum (2002) *Annual Report 2001/02* Caversham: Urban Parks Forum

Vickers, P and Taylor, H (1995) *A Review of Public Parks in England* London: English Heritage

Worpole, K (2000) "Spin in the Park" *Town and Country Planning* 54, February

Woudstra, J & Fieldhouse, K (eds) (2000) *The Regeneration of Public Parks* London: E&FN Spon

9.2 Unpublished sources

- Countryside Agency (2000) "Designed Landscapes and Country Parks" Board paper AP 00/4, 10 February
- Heritage Lottery Fund (1996) Urban Parks Programme – Initial Appraisal Report
- Heritage Lottery Fund (1997) Trustees Papers "Urban Parks Programme", 5 March
Allocation Report, May
Letter from Farrer & Co to Carole North, HLF "Urban Parks Programme", 5 June
Historic Landscape Survey and Restoration Management Plan – Enclosure in Application Pack, 26 June
Trustees Papers 193/32 HLF item 15 "Urban Parks – a Strategic Approach", 25 November
- Heritage Lottery Fund (1998) Trustees Papers 195/34 HLF item 16 "Urban Parks – a Strategic Approach, Update",
Do. item 15 "The Funding of Options Appraisals, Feasibility Studies, Landscape Restoration Plans, Conservation Plans and Development Costs for Capital Projects", 22 January
Draft Policy Paper "Proposed revised strategy for the Urban Parks Programme", 28 May
Small Grants Committee Papers item 4 "Historic Landscape Restoration Plans", 2 June
Minutes of Small Grants Committee Meeting "Historic Landscape Restoration Plans", 2 June
Trustees Papers 202/41 HLF item 12 "Allocation of Budgets, October 98 – March 99", 10 September
- Heritage Lottery Fund (1999) Public responses to Draft Strategic Plan, January
Trustees Papers 206/45 item 14 "The Urban Parks Programme", 26 January
HLF response to House of Commons, Culture, Media and Sport Committee report "Heritage Lottery Fund", April
Policy Abstract – Urban Parks Programme, 12 May
Historic Buildings and Land Panel Papers 34/EPB item 8 "Urban Parks Programme – Update", 26 October
Trustees Papers 216/55 HLF paper 8 "Urban Parks Programme - Update", 14 December
- Heritage Lottery Fund (2000) Policy Statement on Urban Parks and Designed Landscapes, Draft, 1 March
Trustees Papers 225/64 HLF paper 12 "Public Parks: Review of Urban Parks Programme"
- PriceWaterhouseCoopers (1999) Landscape Heritage Trust. Unpublished report for the steering group of the Landscape Heritage Trust

9.3 Major newspaper and magazine and articles relating to UPP

Note: the UPP attracted a great deal of national and local media attention, consequently only those articles from national publications relating to the UPP overall, or to particularly interesting or important aspects of the UPP, are included here. HLF holds several ring binders with copies of local press coverage arranged alphabetically by name of town.

Daily Mail	Perking up the parks	16 May 97
	£16 million for parks to be proud of	18 May 98
	Shame of our decaying parks	6 Nov 99
Daily Telegraph	£57m lifeline to restore gentility to urban Parks	16 May 97
	Let's put some life back into our parks	16 May 97
	Wind of change in the people's playgrounds	26 Jul 97
	£11.5m lottery handout for urban parks	3 Dec 97
	Parks fit for our children	28 Mar 98
	Change and decay of urban parks	6 Nov 99
	Urban parks "being left to decay"	6 Nov 99
The Economist	Park life	6 Dec 97
Evening Standard	Essentials for the quality of life	21 Jan 97
	London's new millionaire parks	16 May 97
	Rus in urbe	16 May 97
	£7m grants new lease of life for London park	18 May 98
The Express	You can keep the country – I'll take a walk in the park	17 May 97
	Our green and neglected land	6 Nov 99
	Cities need a sanctuary	6 Nov 99
Express on Sunday	Lottery cash means number's up for poor parks	14 Dec 97
Financial Times	Run-down parks win £57m lottery facelift	16 May 97
The Garden	The price of revitalising parks	Jun 96
Garden History Soc News	Heritage Lottery Fund: Urban Parks Awards	Summer 97
The Guardian	Face-lift for 48 parks, courtesy of the Lottery	16 May 97
	Keep off the brass	20 Jan 99
	The havens that have gone to hell	6 Nov 99
Horticulture Week	Urban parks share £57 million	15 May 97
	Jackpot	12 Jun 97
	Nothing is healthier than an urban park	21 Aug 97
	Parks "need money"	18 Sep 97
	Heritage Fund set to shrink says chairman	13 Nov 97
	Parks get £11.5m from Lottery in fund round	4 Dec 97
	Councils must organise to win lottery	11 Dec 97
	Parks must keep winning Lottery	22 Jan 98
	Lottery fund will still back parks	12 Mar 98
	Historic gardens given payout from Lottery	2 Apr 98
	Thinking small may mean a big lottery win	25 Jun 98
	Small grants go further	24 Sep 98
	Parks hope to profit from heritage pay out	1 Oct 98
	Parks in prime position for Lottery funding	29 Oct 98
	Parks must not be Lottery losers	5 Nov 98

	Parks must fight to keep lottery funding	26 Nov 98
	Lottery funding pledge to parks	14 Jan 99
	Lottery U-turn leaves door open for urban park bids	11 Feb 99
	Parks get £13m from Heritage Lottery Fund	18 Apr 99
	Take the green path to health and wealth	8 Jul 99
	Historic Parks survey in pipeline	15 Jul 99
	Parks get flood of Lottery money	5 Aug 99
	Report urges revolution for parks	11 Nov 99
	English Heritage denies neglect	11 Nov 99
	Report presses for parks agency	11 Nov 99
	Parks agency proposal rejected	9 Mar 00
Independent	Haven on earth	9 Aug 97
	Lottery cash for parks, says poll	4 Sep 97
	Urban parks come out of the wilderness	4 Mar 98
	Parks in towns are “appallingly neglected”	6 Nov 99
	Urban parks neglect	20 Nov 99
Landscape Design	Specialist treatment for urban parks	Jun 96
	Urban parks: the battle goes on	Oct 96
	Lottery cash for historic parks	Feb 97
	Editorial	Mar 97
	Urban parks delay	Apr 97
	Paying for the park	May 97
	Tomorrow’s parks	May 97
	Green cities?	Dec 97
	Pride and prejudice	Mar 98
	Trust the experts	Apr 98
	Editorial	May 98
	No littering here	Jun 98
	Reversing the downward spiral of neglect	Mar 99
	The wind of change	Mar 99
	Maintaining momentum	Mar 99
	UPP Questionnaire: progress report	Mar 99
Landscape Design Extra	A new prosperity for our parks?	Jun 98
	Urban parks payout	Jun 98
Leisure Management	Doubting the department	Sep 96
The Leisure Manager	Lottery Fund spells positive future for historic urban parks	25 Apr 96
	Prioritising parks	Feb/Mar 97
	Heritage Lottery Fund praised for funding park facelifts	May/Jun 97
	£57 million Lottery boost for urban parks	Jun/Jul 97
	National spearhead for revival of parks	Sep 97
	Latest heritage parks awards top £100 million	Jul 98
	Committee urges new parks commitment	Apr 99
	Green light for urban parks in HLF strategy	Jul 99
	Select Committee hears ILAM plea for parks	Aug 99
Leisure News	HLF seek empirical parks data	11 Nov 99
	ILAM praises parks report	11 Nov 99
Leisure Week	Field goals	4 Apr 97

	A shot in the park	30 May 97
	“Elite” tag for heritage unfair	8 May 98
Local Government News	It could be you	Mar 98
	A tale of three cities	Mar 98
Lottery Monitor	Give credit where it’s due	May 97
Municipal Journal	A green and pleasant urbanscape	Jun 96
	Park life	Oct 96
Municipal Review	Future urban parks	May 96
Perspectives on Architecture	Making a day of it	Aug/Sep 97
Planning	Park pocket proves popular	Oct 96
Sunday Telegraph	Living on the park	7 Jul 96
Surveyor	Parks management	29 May 97
	Heritage Fund to shun urban work	10 Dec 98
The Times	Public parks to regain their lost splendour	16 May 97
	Municipal glories	16 May 97
	Union fights to put pride back into urban parks	21 Jul 97
	Traditional keepers can revive our city parks, say MPs	6 Nov 99
	From bombsite to urban Eden	6 Nov 99
Urban Environment Today	Government must write role of leisure into regeneration	30 Apr 98
	£51m in HLF grants boost urban parks	1 Apr 99

9.4 HLF Press Releases featuring the UPP

Heritage Lottery Fund launches Urban Parks Programme in Sheffield, 29 January 1996
72 Heritage Lottery Fund grants announced for Urban Parks, Town Centres and Nature Reserves and Community Centres benefit, 12 December 1996
Heritage Lottery Fund restoring Park-Life, 15 May 1997
Heaton Park celebrates Heritage Lottery Fund grant with football in the park, 14 July 1997
Glasgow's Green Revival, 2 December 1997
£78 million sees rebirth of urban parks, 2 December 1997
Heritage Lottery Fund Awards top £1 billion, 19 May 1998
Parks, Paintings and Prose, 6 October 1999
Opening up space to live and breathe, 9 July 2001
Celebrating historic park's new look, 11 September 2001
Plans for Camden's Waterlow Park get full support from Heritage Lottery Fund, 25 September 2001
Christmas cracker for Cuerden Valley Park, 21 December 2001

10.0 Grants awarded under the UPP

10.1 Grants for restoration plans

Suggest print-out of grant awards should be attached to this report in award date order

10.2 Project implementation grants

Suggest print-out of grant awards should be attached to this report in award date order