

Community News: for the Echo, 20th January 2007

Pittville

The Heritage Lottery Bid. On December 22nd, Cheltenham Borough Council applied for a £50,000 National Heritage Lottery Fund Planning Grant under the “Parks for People“ programme, to restore, conserve and enhance the historic Grade II listed landscape of the Pittville Estate. On receipt of the planning grant – and competition is extremely fierce- the council must, to secure full funding, demonstrate that detailed proposals for the future will increase the number and range of different people enjoying the Park by providing activities and amenities appropriate to their interests and needs. Most importantly, the proposals must be shown to reflect widespread public support. The Council has already consulted the Friends of Pittville, the Pittville Area Residents Association (PARA), Parkwatch and other interested groups.

Pittville Park and Estate is Cheltenham’s largest area of open green space and is a vital “green lung“ of the town. If successful, the Heritage Grant will be one of the most important events in the recent history of the Borough. The Council’s planning Group is making every effort to ensure that consultation for the proposals is as widely based as possible. Full details of the Council bid, the consultation process and all future developments may be found on the internet web site: www.friendsofpittville.org.

Consequently, on Wednesday 24th January at 7.15 in the Pump Room, The Pittville Area Residents Association is organising a “Back to the Future” special event. It will start with a talk by the distinguished Cheltenham historian Steven Blake, on the origins and development of Pittville Park and the surrounding estate. It will be followed by a discussion of the proposals for the future development of the area. In view of the launching of the bid by the Borough to secure the National Heritage Lottery grant, this event offers a unique opportunity for local residents to understand what has gone before in Pittville and to make an informed input to the future consultative process. All residents of Pittville and the surrounding area are warmly invited, free of charge.

Birdwatch in the Park. The annual Birdwatch organised by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds takes place on the weekend of January 27th and 28th. This year Cheltenham Bird Club have teamed up with the local Community Rangers and the Friends of Pittville to help watchers of all ages do their one hour recording in Pittville Park.

Why not come along and join in? Bird Club Members will welcome you on the bridge in the Park by the main playground on Sunday January 28th from 10am to 2pm. They will help with viewing and recognising birds, filling in the record sheets, arranging short walks and providing other information

All ages are welcome but children must be accompanied by adults. Don’t forget to dress for the cold and wet and bring something to write with. This is a great opportunity for families to come along and find out more about birds they might often see in their park but not know much about. It is also an opportunity for people to actively participate in bird conservation as they will help the RSPB get vital information about UK birds. For more information on the RSPB Birdwatch go to www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch

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