



Top Twenty Questions – September 2018

1. What is happening to the Coach House ?

It is being developed to have a café with indoor and outdoor seating, a visitor welcome area with information and orientation and an interpretation exhibition telling the story of the park from Sir George Staunton to the present day. There will also be an activity room for groups and plant and produce sales in the courtyard area. Upstairs will be volunteer and ranger welfare and office space and a Heritage Hub.

2. What about adjoining buildings?

The adjacent stable block will be converted into fully accessible WCs and an activity room for the BCP supported volunteers and community. Part of the Sawmill will be retained by the Ranger Team and part used by Havant Day Services.

3. What improvements will there be to the landscape ?

An updated landscape plan has been produced showing entrances, paths, drainage, vegetation clearance, views and concept designs. The landscape will be renovated to reflect the different historical influences on its design. There will be elements of the Sir George Staunton and the William Stone landscapes alongside the path network incorporating wayfinding and trails. The Masterplan shows what will be achieved by this project, delivered by contractors, the horticulture and ranger teams and volunteers.

4. Storey Gardens

The walled Storey Gardens will cease to be an overflow car park and will be returned to its historic use. It will be developed by the BCP to become the focal point for volunteers and students as they return it to growing fruit, vegetables and flowering plants. A community orchard will be accessible to the general public and growing areas and poly tunnels set aside for volunteers and students

5. What is happening to the paths?

The condition of the existing path network will be improved in the areas that need it most. The network will continue to be maintained as part of the ongoing management and maintenance of the site. Some historic paths will be restored allowing the park to be experienced in the way it would have been in Regency or Victorian times.

6. What is happening to the follies?

The Shell House (including the Shell House path), Beacon and Chinese Bridge will be conserved and restored and the island Fort will be stabilized and revealed. The condition of each has been assessed and the history and design researched to ensure that work is carried out appropriately. Lost follies will be researched by volunteers and as information becomes available they will be added a folly trail.

7. Are you having a new car park?

Yes, a new car park is being constructed on the existing Nursery site (BCP will move their growing operations to the Storey Gardens and indoor space to the adjacent Sawmill). For the first time there will be a dedicated car park allowing visitors to arrive in the parkland. It will also serve as an overflow car park for the farm. HCC is installing a new payment system ensuring car parking will operate efficiently and be cost effective.

A bicycle storage area will be provided adjacent to the Coach House and pedestrians will be able to enter the park at many different points as they can now.

8. How much will you charge and will residents get a discount?

Parking charges will be in line with other country parks with options to pay for up to an hour, up to three hours or all day. Local residents won't get a discount (many access the park on foot anyway) but there will be a parking season ticket which will be good value for frequent visitors.

9. How long will it take?

Small scale building works to the Sawmill will happen in the autumn/winter of 2018 and the main building/landscape works will run from early 2019 with an expected completion date of November 2019. Visitors will also notice carefully planned vegetation clearance starting in the new year.

10. Which areas of the park will we be able to access when the works are going on?

The works will be phased so that visitors should have access to all parts of the park apart from the areas that are actually being worked on. It might mean that at one stage the path along one side of the lake is open while the other is being resurfaced and then vice versa. We will establish a communication system so that visitors can understand which areas they can access and how.

11. Will you charge entry to the park?

No, the parkland will remain free to enter.

12. What are you doing to avoid disturbing the wildlife?

As part of the planning process extensive ecology surveys were carried out so that we could understand what we have in terms of wildlife and how to avoid disturbing it. Reptiles have already been carefully relocated from the new car park site and building work will be timed to avoid disturbing bats. Where vegetation is removed it will happen in two seasonal phases, above ground before March and below ground after April to avoid disturbing dormice.

In addition to this trees have also been surveyed to help inform where they can be thinned or removed and where they must be left. This has all been approved as part of the planning process.

13. What about the lake – is it part of the Lottery project?

The surroundings of the lake are part of the project but not the lake itself. It would have pushed the cost of the capital works beyond an acceptable level for a Lottery grant. The Countryside Service will however continue to manage the lake and it is part of the park management plan.

15. What is happening with Havant Thicket reservoir?

Portsmouth Water has had a long term plan to build a winter storage reservoir on their land in Havant Thicket. The land is currently grassland used for grazing with a few small areas of woodland and has been managed by the Countryside Service on behalf of PW. The plan is now active and work to prepare a planning application has commenced. The target date for delivery of the reservoir is 2029. It is intended that the reservoir will deliver recreational facilities and Staunton is already working with PW to ensure that these are complementary to the park offer.

16. How much is this costing?

The total cost of the project is just over £3.5 million, which is jointly funded by Hampshire County Council and the Heritage Lottery and BIG Lottery funds.

17. What else is happening?

Running alongside the physical changes to the park there will also be the important delivery of the project 'activity plan' which sets out everything we want to do to engage people. This includes activities, events, workshops, training and volunteering opportunities. To help deliver the plan we have employed a p/t volunteer co-ordinator and a community engagement officer – for 3 years. We'll also be offering training opportunities through horticulture apprenticeships over a 3 year period.

18. How can I get involved/find out more information?

You can go to our website <https://www.hants.gov.uk/thingstodo/countryparks/staunton/visit> or leave your details with a member of staff at the farm or in the park. If you have any specific questions you can email stauntonhlf@hants.gov.uk